



# *City of Chico General Plan*

*November 1994*

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# *City of Chico General Plan*

*Prepared for*


*City of Chico*

*by*

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*Brown-Buntin, Inc., Acoustical Consultants*

*November 1994*



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# **CITY OF CHICO**

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James Owens

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Club





Anne Dorr Longazo  
November 13, 1920 to December 20, 1993

This General Plan is dedicated to the memory of Anne Dorr Longazo whose active involvement in making Chico a better place to live, work and play spanned three decades. The Plan's vision reflects much of her enthusiasm and tireless commitment to preserving Chico's uniqueness and sense of community.

Library Commission	1971	-	1979
Appeals Board	1979	-	1983
Planning Commission	1983	-	1984
City Council	1984	-	1985
Planning Commission	1986	-	1993
General Plan Task Force	1991	-	1993





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# SUMMARY

Listed below are key guiding policies that, together with the General Plan Diagram (included at the back of this volume), summarize the vision for Chico's long-range, sustainable and resource-based development embodied in the General Plan. Reference to the full text of the Plan is necessary to determine whether a proposed private or public project is consistent with the Plan. The General Plan also includes additional guiding and implementing policies and explanatory material that will guide Plan implementation, and information on resource-based standards to be used in project review.

## ■ Community Design

### City Form

Reinforce the compact form of the city.

Create a clear definition of the physical extent of the city.

Emphasize key city entrances.

Minimize the intrusion of Highway 99 and its interchanges on the visual character and form of the city.

### Continuity and Connection

Make improvements to the major corridors traversing the city to heighten their visibility and accessibility; design street and creekside improvements in consideration of their hierarchical role and function within the City.

Restrict the scale and size of major arterials so as to avoid creating barriers within the city; establish design guidelines for scenic roads.

Heighten the visual prominence of the creek corridors that help to establish a sense of orientation and identity within the city.

### Neighborhood Conservation and Development

Reinforce the individual character of existing neighborhoods and districts, and encourage neighborhood rehabilitation and improvement.

Protect and enhance the urban forest that reinforces the image and identity of the community and its older neighborhoods.

Encourage positive transitions in scale and character where new development and expansion of existing buildings are proposed.

### Downtown

Reinforce the physical framework which defines the downtown district.

Encourage new development that is urban in scale and character, including buildings of minimum height.

Encourage preservation and enhancement of buildings of special historic and/or architectural interest.

Maintain and enhance a strong pedestrian scale and orientation within Downtown.

Reinforce the role of Plaza Park as the civic and cultural heart of Downtown.

Create stronger visual and physical connections to the Rail Depot.

Improve the physical linkages to the University and Bidwell Park through creek crossings, trails, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Encourage special events, festivities, and celebrations within streets and public spaces Downtown.

### Diamond Match

Encourage preservation/reuse of identified historic structures within Diamond Match.

Create positive linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, and encourage a positive connection and orientation to Comanche Creek.

### **Commercial Strips**

Support beautification of Chico's commercial strips, and encourage infill and adaptive reuse of transitioning commercial developments.

### **Large-Scale Commercial and Industrial Projects**

Encourage consideration of the context and potential linkages to surrounding areas in site and building design of new commercial and industrial projects.

Encourage a human scale in the design of large-scale projects, use of high-quality materials and finishes and innovative site design for surface parking areas.

Incorporate design features that foster a sense of security.

### **New Residential Neighborhoods**

Create new neighborhoods oriented to the pedestrian and establish clear and distinctive neighborhood edges, organized around larger streets and natural features such as streams or creeks, and a central focus of activity within each neighborhood.

Mark major entries to neighborhoods, but prohibit the use of high walls and gated entries which isolate areas from one another and create an unfriendly appearance.

Encourage a fine-grained and integrated pattern of streets that provides continuity, focus, diversity, and a human scale.

Integrate special features as landmarks to heighten a sense of orientation within new neighborhoods, and encourage tree planting.

Encourage diversity in parcel and house sizes, with careful transitions between densities; ensure that higher density development is designed with a street/pedestrian orientation.

Design for greater resident surveillance and visibility of public and semi-public places.

### **Mixed-Use Neighborhood Cores**

Locate mixed-use neighborhood cores centrally within neighborhoods and closely tied to the awkward framework of other parks and community facilities that structure the neighborhoods.

Ensure that the scale and character of development does not overwhelm the neighborhood, and locate parking areas so they do not detract from the pedestrian environment.

Encourage development of farmer's markets and other seasonal events that attract people.

### **Foothill Development**

Blend foothill development with the surrounding landscape and topography, and diminish its visual prominence.

In steep foothill areas, allow for streets that are kept to the minimum dimension necessary for access and parking to reduce grading.

Encourage careful alignment of new roads to provide maximum view corridors, to the extent other objectives, such as solar orientation and circulation, are not diminished.

### **Landmarks and Public Art**

Encourage preservation of identified buildings and landscapes of historic significance.

Identify locations for new landmarks and public art at key places within the city fabric.

Encourage development of cultural and arts facilities Downtown and within neighborhoods.



## ■ Land Use

### Growth and Physical Expansion

Promote orderly and balanced growth and infill development by working with the County to establish long-term growth boundaries for the Planning Area, consistent with Plan objectives. Ensure that new development is at an intensity to ensure a long-term compact urban form.

Maintain boundaries between urban and agricultural uses in the west, and urban uses and the hillsides in the east; limit expansion north and south to maintain compact urban form.

### Residential Land Use

Preserve the scale and character of established neighborhoods.

Provide incentives for development of mixed-use neighborhood centers in both new neighborhoods and established neighborhoods that lack them.

Allow and encourage small-lot single-family housing development.

Improve the community orientation of new residential developments.

### Downtown

Maintain and enhance Downtown's vitality and economic well-being, and its presence as the City's symbolic center.

Encourage development of Downtown as a mixed-use activity center with retail and visitor-oriented uses, business and personal services, government and professional offices, communications facilities, civic uses, and high density residential uses.

Provide incentives for infill development, intensification, and reuse of currently underutilized sites in Downtown.

### Commercial and Retail Land Use

Maintain Chico's prominence as the center of retail activity in the Tri-County area.

Promote neighborhood identity and reduce dependence on the automobile by providing local

shopping centers that many residents can reach on foot or bicycle.

Encourage pedestrian-oriented design in both new shopping areas and existing centers.

Provide specific sites for automobile-oriented services and limit expansion of "strip commercial" centers along Cohasset Road, East Avenue, and Park and Mangrove avenues.

### Offices and R&D Facilities

Encourage large-scale office development and research and development (R&D) facilities to locate in industrial parks.

Encourage professional and administrative offices to locate in and near Downtown, in commercial centers and, in the case of medical offices, near hospitals.

Allow offices serving local needs within the community on "office only" sites and in mixed-use neighborhood cores as secondary uses.

### Industry

Provide appropriately located areas for a broad range of manufacturing, warehousing, and service uses to strengthen the City's economic base and provide employment for residents.

Protect the supply of land suitable for industrial use by not allowing incompatible uses to locate in industrial areas.

Provide sites for non-industrial land uses that complement industrial development or that require an industrial environment.

### Airport

Protect the City's investment in the Municipal Airport and promote airport-related development in the Airport environs.

Prevent development in the Airport environs that will pose hazards to aviation or interfere with or endanger the landing, taking off, or maneuvering of aircraft.

### **Special Development Areas**

Provide policies to guide development at specific sites critical to Plan implementation, including Diamond Match, CSA 87, Bidwell Ranch, Foothill Park, Humboldt Road-Foothills south of State Route 32, the Airport Environs east of Cohasset Road.

### **Jobs/Housing Balance**

Strive to maintain a balance between the number of jobs and the number of employed residents in the Planning Area.

## **■ Transportation**

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation**

Develop a system of sidewalks and bikeways that promote safe walking and bicycle riding for transportation and recreation.

Provide safe and direct pedestrian routes and bikeways between and through neighborhoods and other places within the Planning Area.

Provide adequate bicycle parking; improve safety conditions, efficiency, and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians through traffic engineering and law enforcement efforts, and provide for shaded through-routes, where possible.

Plan and design pedestrian facilities to meet the needs of disabled persons.

### **Transportation System Management (TSM)**

Establish a minimum 10 percent trip reduction goal.

Ensure that major employers, including the City, implement TSM programs to reduce peak-period trip generation.

Cooperate with public agencies and other entities to promote local and regional public transit serving Chico.

### **Standards for Traffic Level of Service**

Strive to maintain traffic LOS C on residential streets and LOS D or better on arterial and

collector streets and at all intersections during peak hours.

### **Circulation and Street System**

Promote safe and efficient vehicle circulation; make efficient use of existing facilities, and through the arrangement of land uses, improved alternate modes, and provision of more direct routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, strive to reduce the total vehicle-miles travelled.

Provide fair and equitable means for paying for future street improvements.

### **Neighborhood Streets**

Provide for increased connections between and within neighborhoods for bicycles, pedestrians, and, where appropriate, automobiles.

### **Parking**

Expand public parking programs Downtown to alleviate existing and future shortages.

Require all development outside Downtown to provide off-street parking, but limit parking consistent with other Plan policies related to air quality and resource conservation.

### **Goods Movement**

Provide adequate circulation and off-street parking and loading facilities for trucks and facilitate intermodal goods delivery.

### **Airport**

Maintain and improve Chico Municipal Airport for commercial and general aviation and for special aviation needs, including facilities for propeller, turbo, motorcraft and jet aircraft.

### **Railroads**

Explore opportunities to increase rail passenger and inter-city bus transit services wherever possible.

## ■ Parks and Public Facilities and Services

### Parks and Recreational Open Space

Develop a diversified, high-quality public park system that provides recreation opportunities at a variety of scales for all residents

Use the creeks as a framework to provide a network of open space.

Locate future neighborhood parks closer to where people live where possible.

Continue cooperative efforts with CARD and CUSD to provide recreational facilities.

### Educational Facilities

Support the efforts by CUSD, CSUC, and Butte College to maintain and improve educational facilities and services.

Encourage CUSD to provide educational facilities with sufficient permanent capacity to meet the needs of current and projected enrollment, and cooperate with CUSD and CARD in coordinating joint use of school facilities for community recreation.

### Water Supply and Wastewater Service

Promote orderly and efficient expansion of public utilities to meet projected needs.

Encourage water conservation with incentives for decreased water use and active public education programs.

### Coordinating and Funding Infrastructure

Coordinate capital improvements planning for all municipal service infrastructure with the direction, extent, and timing of growth.

Establish equitable methods for distributing costs associated with serving new development, including impact fees, where warranted.

### Storm Drainage

Develop a comprehensive storm drainage plan that includes alternative storm control features and use of detention and retention basins.

Establish equitable methods of paying for future storm drainage improvements.

### Community Services

Support efforts to improve and expand health and social services for all segments of the community.

Encourage development of adequate, affordable, and quality child care.

### Resource-based Thresholds and Performance Standards for New Development

Establish and maintain standards for public services and facilities to ensure that service demands of new development do not exceed the capacities of streets, utilities and other public services.

Require new development to pay for mitigating impacts on existing public services and facilities to maintain service levels.

## ■ Economic Development

Maintain a balanced land use program that provides opportunities for commercial and industrial development.

Actively promote economic development opportunities and knowledge of Chico in the region, state, and nation; maintain a positive small-business climate, and strengthen the City's tax base by encouraging environmentally sensitive development with tax generation potential.

Promote economic development activities that link residents with businesses in the City, such as job training and job development, and facilitate jobs/housing balance.

Encourage agricultural processing and cooperative distribution and marketing of agricultural products grown locally.



Promote high technology and research and development activities, and enhance aspects of the community that help economic development and draw residents to Chico.

Encourage large businesses in Chico to make purchases in the community whenever possible to support local firms.

## ■ Open Space and Environmental Conservation

### Air Quality

Strive to meet all state and federal air quality standards; reduce generation of air pollutants.

Promote the use of trees and plants in landscaping to reduce air pollutant levels.

Coordinate air quality, transportation, and land use planning with the County and agencies responsible for air quality management.

### Biotic Resources

Protect habitats that are sensitive, rare, declining, unique, or represent valuable biological resources in the Planning Area.

Preserve and protect areas determined to function as regional wildlife corridors, particularly those areas that provide natural connections permitting wildlife movement between sensitive habitats and areas being considered for future conservation because of their high value.

Provide for no net loss of overall wetland acreage; where such losses may be unavoidable at the project level, require mitigation that meets the no net loss goal.

### Water Quality

Enhance the quality of surface water resources of the Planning Area and prevent their contamination.

Comply with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's regulations and standards to maintain and improve groundwater quality.

Where feasible, maintain the natural condition of waterways and flood plains and protect

watersheds to ensure adequate groundwater recharge and water quality.

### Open Space

Maintain hillsides and viable agricultural lands as open space for resource conservation and preservation of views.

Preserve and enhance Chico's creeks and the riparian corridors adjacent to them as open space corridors for the visual amenity, drainage, fisheries, wildlife habitats, flood control, and water quality value.

Where feasible, integrate creekside greenways with the City's open space system and encourage public access to creek corridors.

Protect aquifer recharge areas needed to maintain adequate groundwater supplies.

Maintain oak woodlands and habitat for sensitive biological resources as open space for resource conservation/resource management.

Minimize conflicts between urban and agricultural uses by requiring buffers and greenbelts.

### Agriculture

Promote continued agricultural use of important farmland outside the urban area.

Continue to work with Butte County to maintain the Greenline.

Minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses by requiring buffers or use restrictions or using roads or creeks to separate uses.

### Mineral Resources

Work with the State and Butte County to identify and protect significant mineral resources in the Planning Area.

Coordinate mineral resource extraction with other land uses.



### **Archaeological, Historic, and Paleontological Resources**

Protect archaeological, historic, and paleontological resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural values.

### **Energy Resources**

Conserve scarce or nonrenewable energy resources.

Promote energy efficiency in new subdivisions and in building design.

### **Waste Management and Recycling**

Reduce the generation of solid waste, including hazardous waste, and recycle those materials that are used, to slow the filling of local and regional landfills.

## **■ Safety and Safety Services**

### **Flooding and Dam Inundation**

Minimize threat to life and property from flooding and dam inundation.

### **Seismic and Geologic Hazards**

Protect lives and property from seismic and geologic hazards.

### **Fire Services**

Continue to provide high-quality, effective, and efficient fire protection services for Chico area residents.

Minimize the loss of life and property resulting from the hazards of fire, medical and rescue emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and disaster response and recovery.

### **Law Enforcement**

Continue to provide community-oriented policing services that are responsive to citizens' needs.

Increase and maintain public confidence in the ability of the Police Department to provide quality police services.

### **Emergency Management**

Use the City's Emergency Plan as the guide for emergency management.

### **Miscellaneous Hazards**

Protect residents from the potential health dangers of electric and magnetic fields generated by power transmission lines and other sources, and hazards associated with agricultural spraying and wind-shear.

## **■ Noise**

Protect public health and welfare by eliminating existing noise problems where feasible, by establishing standards for acceptable indoor and outdoor noise, and by preventing significant increases in noise levels.

Incorporate noise considerations into land use planning decisions, and guide the location and design of transportation facilities to minimize the effects of noise on adjacent land uses.



# INTRODUCTION







# 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Seeking inexpensive land and new economic opportunities, John Bidwell, a New York native, joined an overland expedition of settlers and started westward in the spring of 1841. As a member of the first band of white settlers to cross the Sierra into California, Bidwell became enchanted with the beauty and the agricultural potential of the Chico Creek area, and purchased Rancho del Arroyo Chico on the north side of Chico Creek in 1844. As early as 1847 Bidwell maintained experimental orchards and fields along with his extensive farming operations.<sup>1</sup> He founded the City of Chico in 1860.

The original townsite was laid out in a grid pattern by J.S. Henry, a land surveyor. Chico State Normal School, the predecessor of California State University, was organized in 1887; Mrs. Bidwell donated the land and was a major benefactor. She also was instrumental in creating Bidwell Park, one of the largest public parks in the nation with over 2,000 acres. Bidwell Park was granted to the City in 1905, and the City Park Commission was created in 1918.

Expanding upon its agricultural origins, Chico has grown from an individual rancho in 1844 to the center of economic activity of the Tri-county area, which includes Butte, Glenn, and Tehama counties. Currently, an estimated 46 percent of Butte County jobs are located in the Planning Area, and Chico captures about half of Butte County's retail sales, largely because of the regional malls and major discount retailers that have located in the community. Chico is a major medical and education center serving the entire north-eastern part of California.

The City's first General Plan was adopted in 1961, although long-range studies of city services and facilities preceded that date. The second Plan was adopted in 1976 and addressed a whole range of issues associated with development and environmental conservation. This Plan marks a continuum in Chico's established planning tradition. It is designed to provide the City and the citizens with a readable, accessible, and useable document containing policies to conserve and enhance the community's resources and provide for future growth and development.

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<sup>1</sup>

McGie, Joseph F. *History of Butte County, Volume 1, 1840-1919*. Butte County Board of Education, 1982.

Detailed information measures will be established separately, in an ordinance to be approved subsequent to plan adoption. Upon adoption by the City Council, this General Plan will replace the 1976 - 1995 General Plan, and will serve as the City's "constitution" and its statement of direction for its physical development for the next twenty or so years. It carries forward those goals and policies from the earlier Plan that are still relevant.

This chapter provides an overview of the Plan themes, and the scope and organization of the General Plan. A glossary of planning terms follows the Appendix. The Index can be used to locate specific topics.

## **1.1 GENERAL PLAN THEMES**

The General Plan addresses citywide concerns about growth and conservation. Topics such as resource management, economic development, community design, affordable housing, safety, noise, and community services are included because they all have physical and environmental implications that are critical to the creation of a sustainable community.

The policies of the General Plan reflect nine overall themes:

- ▶ **Sustainable Development that Balances Growth and Conservation.** Balancing concerns relating planning for growth and those focusing on conservation of resources is a key premise of the Plan. While the Plan does not dictate a growth rate, it seeks to ensure that growth does not erode those qualities of Chico that make it an attractive place in which to live and work.
- ▶ **Resource-based Planning.** The Plan seeks to ensure that future growth will be in harmony with Chico's natural setting. Development in resource-sensitive areas will be permitted only upon preparation of plans and implementation strategies that will ensure the continued viability of the resources.
- ▶ **Protection of Agricultural and Natural Resources.** The General Plan reaffirms the City's long-standing commitment to protect viable agricultural and natural resources. Fieldwork undertaken as part of the General Plan helped identify and establish priorities for protection of significant biotic resources in the Planning Area. The Plan outlines strategies for acquisition and preservation of sensitive habitats and creekside greenways and stipulates criteria for development in resource-sensitive areas.
- ▶ **Setting Urban Growth Limits.** Much of the debate that accompanied Plan preparation has centered on where and how growth should occur. The General Plan Diagram reflects the citizens' desire for a compact form, with new

development contiguous to existing urban areas. On the westside, the "Greenline" is maintained. On the eastside, the General Plan responds to concerns expressed about the need to limit development in the foothills and establish an urban limit line, based in part on elevation, to protect vernal pools and oak woodlands and preserve views of hillsides and open space.

- ▶ **Enhancement of Community Character and Identity.** An assessment of community character was the first step undertaken as part of the General Plan Update. The Community Design Element outlines policies to reinforce the City's identity and to ensure that new development builds on the City's traditional character, and is responsive to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ▶ **Neighborhood-oriented Development.** A guiding premise of the Plan is that activities and facilities used on a frequent basis, such as stores and parks, should be easily accessible to residents. The General Plan directs new growth in the form of mixed-use neighborhoods and provides sites for parks, stores and offices in neighborhoods that presently lack them. The Plan provides more, smaller neighborhood centers and restricts larger outlets to appropriate sites in community and regional centers.
- ▶ **Economic Development.** In addition to ensuring that adequate sites are available for future commercial and industrial development at appropriate locations, the Plan proposes a comprehensive strategy for job creation and job retention. This includes promotional activities targeted to environmentally-sensitive industries, education and training, technical assistance and direct financial aid, and programs to enhance the use of the airport and attract industry to its environs.
- ▶ **Fostering Development Patterns that Offer Alternatives to Automobile Use.** Chico's level topography and mature landscape offer a pleasant environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Yet many of the subdivisions built in the 1970s and 1980s create circuitous routes, and the single-use pattern in areas at the city-edge adds distance to trips. The Plan counters these trends by proposing development at intensities that would make transit feasible, land-use patterns to reduce distances between uses, and a renewed emphasis on traditional street patterns providing easy access for all residents, including bicyclists and pedestrians. A more connected bicycle system and standards to monitor bike-flows are also included. This emphasis on alternative transportation also will have air quality benefits.



- ▶ **Using Performance-based Standards for Services to Ensure Sustainability.** Standards for capital facilities and public services, such as streets, parks, storm drainage and fire-safety, are established to ensure that growth does not exceed carrying capacity. To maintain the quality of public services for residents, new development would be required to meet specific standards established by the Plan. In addition, the Annual Report on the General Plan will include progress made towards implementing the mitigation contained in the EIR of the Plan.

## **1.2 GENERAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

State law requires each California city and county to prepare a general plan. A general plan is defined as “a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning.” State requirements call for general plans that “comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the adopting agency.”

While they allow considerable flexibility, state planning laws do establish some requirements for the issues that general plans must address. The California Government Code establishes both the content of general plans and rules for their adoption and subsequent amendment. Together, state law and judicial decisions establish three overall guidelines for general plans.

- ▶ **The General Plan Must Be Comprehensive.** This requirement has two aspects. First, the general plan must be **geographically** comprehensive. That is, it must apply throughout the entire incorporated area and it should include other areas that the City determines are relevant to its planning. Second, the general plan must address the **full range of issues** that affects the City's physical development.
- ▶ **The General Plan Must Be Internally Consistent.** This requirement means that the General Plan must fully integrate its separate parts and relate them to each other without conflict. “Horizontal” consistency applies as much to figures and diagrams as to the general plan text. It also applies to data and analysis as well as policies. All adopted portions of the general plan, whether required by state law or not, have equal legal weight. None may supersede another, so the General Plan must resolve conflicts among the provisions of each element.
- ▶ **The General Plan Must Be Long-Range.** Because anticipated development will affect the City and the people who live or work there for years to come, state law requires every general plan to take a long-term perspective. While the time-horizon at which buildout of the Plan would occur is not specified, it is expected that the City's natural growth rate will be maintained. No targets on annual

growth rates are dictated by the Plan. An on-going review and evaluation process which enables the Plans' time-horizon to be extended regularly is provided for in this Plan.

### **1.3 SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN**

While the Plan is long-range and holistic, global issues such as "quality of life" and "community character", and sufficiency issues, such as "ability to provide services" or "adequacy of land to meet future needs", are taken a step farther to establish a specific set of policies and standards to guide decision-making.

Chico's General Plan has five main purposes:

- ▶ To outline a vision for Chico's long-range, sustainable, and resource-based development that reflects the aspirations of the community and a strategy for accomplishing that vision;
- ▶ To provide a basis for judging whether specific development proposals and public projects are in harmony with Plan policies and resource-based standards and consistent with the concept of a sustainable community;
- ▶ To provide a basis for continuing consultation with Butte County on policies and standards that are within the County's jurisdiction;
- ▶ To allow City departments, other public agencies, and private developers to design projects that will enhance the character of the community, preserve and enhance critical environmental resources, and minimize hazards; and
- ▶ To provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for a capital improvement program.

The General Plan articulates a vision for the City, but it is not merely a compendium of ideas and wish lists. Plan policies focus on what is concrete and achievable and set forth actions to be undertaken by the City. Because of legal requirements that a variety of City actions be consistent with the General Plan, regular on-going use of the Plan is essential. Because the Plan is both general and long-range, there will be circumstances and instances when detailed studies are necessary before Plan policies can be implemented.



## BACKGROUND STUDIES

As part of the General Plan preparation, several technical studies were conducted to document environmental conditions, and analyze prospects for economic development, community character and growth, and expansion alternatives. Most important of these is the *Master Environmental Assessment*, which provides a comprehensive inventory of existing conditions in the Planning Area on topics ranging from land use, community design, transportation and environmental resources, to economic growth and community services. The *Master Environmental Assessment* will be updated on a regular basis, preferably prior to the five-year comprehensive review of the Plan. Other studies include the *Community Character Assessment*, which assesses the physical character of Chico and includes results of a visual preference survey, and *Comprehensive Habitat Mapping and Biological Resource Inventory*, which includes results of fieldwork to assess biological resources. A series of policy memoranda and two working papers — *Opportunities, Constraints and Planning Options*, and *Sketch Plans* — were also produced.

While these background studies and working papers have guided Plan preparation, they do not represent adopted City policy.

## 1.4 PLAN ORGANIZATION

The General Plan is organized in four main parts:

- I Community Design.** This part includes policies to conserve and promote Chico's character and identity, building on its traditional character and landscape, and the design framework for new development in the City.
- II Land Use, Transportation, and Community Development.** This part provides the physical framework for development in the Planning Area. It establishes policies related to the growth and expansion, location and intensity of development, and standards for public facilities and services. Also included is a chapter that provides specific policies that articulate an economic development strategy for the City.
- III Resource Management.** This part provides the framework for open space and environmental conservation and outlines ways to minimize the impact of safety hazards and noise.
- IV Housing.** A summary of the adopted Housing Element, including all the policies contained in the complete Element are included here.

Following Plan adoption, an Implementation Program will be prepared. It will outline the overall implementation strategy and the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies and City departments in carrying out the Plan.

The General Plan includes the seven elements required by state law (Land Use, Housing, Circulation, Open Space, Conservation, Noise and Safety) and other elements that address local concerns and regional requirements. The state-required mandatory elements are included in the General Plan, as outlined in Table 1.4-1.

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**TABLE 1.4-1  
CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN REQUIRED GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS AND SECTIONS  
IN THE CHICO GENERAL PLAN**

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Required Elements	Where included in the General Plan
Land Use	Chapter 3: Land Use
Circulation	Chapter 4: Transportation
Conservation	Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation
Housing	Chapter 10: Housing
Open Space	Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation
Safety	Chapter 8: Safety
Noise	Chapter 9: Noise

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## ORGANIZATION OF THE ELEMENTS

Each chapter or element of the General Plan includes a statement of purpose and a description of the requirements of state planning law for general plan adequacy. Pertinent information from the background reports is summarized and references to the *Master Environmental Assessment* (MEA) are listed for readers interested in specific detailed technical background information. The relation of each element to other Plan elements is also described. This introductory material is followed by topical sections, which include policies pertinent to the topics.

**Guiding and Implementing Policies.** The General Plan includes guiding policies and implementing policies. Guiding policies are the City's statements of its goals and philosophy. Implementing policies represent commitments to specific actions. They may refer to existing programs or call for establishment of new ones. Together, the guiding and implementing policies articulate a vision for Chico that the General Plan seeks to achieve. Guiding and implementing policies also provide protection for Chico's resources by establishing planning requirements, programs, standards, and criteria for project review.

Explanatory material accompanies some policies. This explanatory material provides background information or is intended to guide Plan implementation. The use of "should" or "would" indicates that a statement is advisory, not binding; details will need to be resolved in Plan implementation. Where the same topic is addressed in more than one chapter, sections and policies are cross-referred, typically in italics for easy reference.

**Policy Numbering System.** Policies in the General Plan are organized using a two-part numbering system. The first part refers to the element and the second the order in which the policy appears in the chapter, with a letter designation to distinguish guiding policies from implementing policies. For example, the first guiding policy in the Land Use Element is numbered LU-G-1 and the first implementing policy is LU-I-1. Thus, each policy in the Plan has a discrete number.

## **1.5 PLANNING AREA**

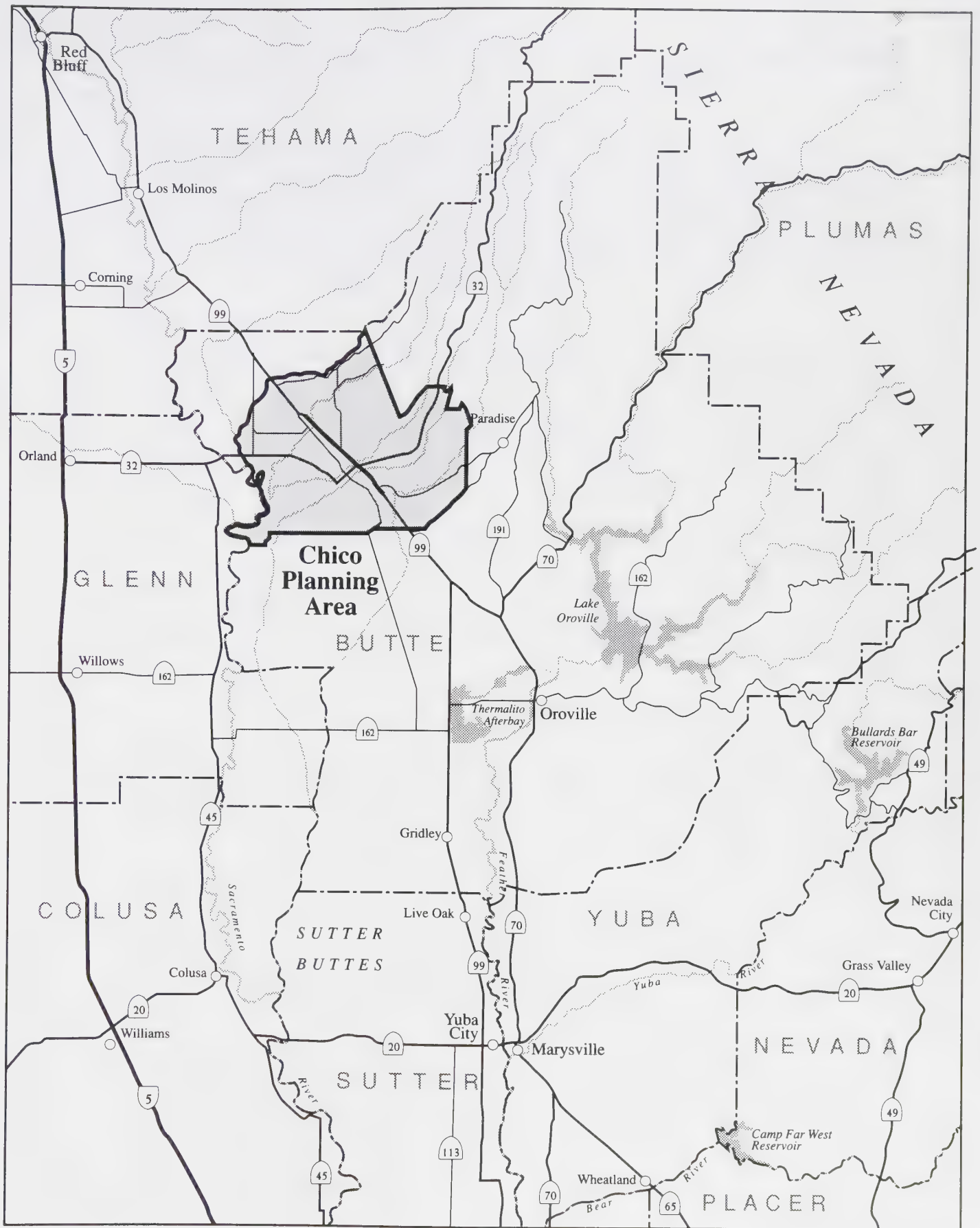
The Chico Planning Area (Planning Area) for the General Plan consists of approximately 150 square miles of land located in the west-central portion of Butte County (Figure 1-1: Regional Setting). The Planning Area includes all of the incorporated City of Chico, and surrounding land which may influence, or be influenced by, City policies. State law generally describes a Planning Area as the City and "...any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgement bears relation to its planning."

## **1.6 PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM**

In November 1991, the City Council appointed a 41-member Task Force to review the City's 1976 General Plan and to advise the Council on updating the Plan. The Task Force represented a cross-section of community interests, including environmental groups, utility providers, education, recreation, social services, business and economic interests, City boards and commissions, and also included at-large members.

The General Plan Task Force, meeting over a six-month period, identified critical issues facing Chico and recommended that a comprehensive update to the Plan be undertaken. The City Council concurred with the Task Force, and a consultant team was retained to work with City Council, the Task Force, and City staff on the update.





In the following months, issues were refined, and a series of background studies, as outlined in Section 1.3, were undertaken to analyze existing conditions and evaluate prospects for growth and conservation. These were supplemented with interviews with residents representing a broad community viewpoint, including agricultural, business, environmental, student, minority, and development groups and service providers. Focused meetings, such as for scoping environmental issues, were also held.

Policy memoranda, sketch plans, and working papers were presented to the Task Force and were discussed and debated in meetings and in workshops. The City Council and the Planning Commission were involved at key decision-making points throughout the process. This involvement included numerous work sessions with the Task Force to review and comment on the Discussion Draft General Plan prior to publishing the Draft General Plan. An extensive outreach program to involve the public in the update of the Plan, summarized as follows, was also undertaken.

### **PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION**

Throughout the General Plan update process, the City Council was committed to an active public outreach program. The program helped to increase public awareness and provided opportunities for the public to participate actively in the creation of a new vision for Chico.

Public awareness techniques included:

- ▶ **Newsletters.** Newsletters were prepared periodically and distributed to agencies, groups, and interested parties. They were also provided to community organizations to insert in their own mail-outs, reaching a direct audience of an estimated 3,000 area residents.
- ▶ **Display Boards.** These provided information about the update and were leased throughout the process. They were placed at high visibility locations and events, such as the North Valley Plaza and Chico malls, Butte County Library, City Council Chamber Lobby, Chico Silver Dollar Fair, Endangered Species Fair California State University, and Chico Earth Day.
- ▶ **Video.** A video describing many of the important issues and opportunities facing the community in the Plan update was prepared early in the process in collaboration with Butte College. This video was made available on loan and shown at several community events.

In addition to the City Council and Planning Commission meetings, forums for residents to provide input included:



- ▶ **Community Meetings.** These were held at two stages of the update process. Nine meetings were conducted during Spring 1993, and a second series of community meetings was held on the Draft General Plan in Summer 1994. Comments at the latter meetings were provided to the Planning Commission and City Council during hearings leading to adoption of the Plan.
- ▶ **Cable Television.** Live call-in shows were held twice during the update process. Residents participated by calling in their questions or comments during the program. City staff, City Council members, Task Force representatives and the General Plan consultants responded to the questions live. The success of these programs has led to periodic City Council call-in shows.

The television media was also used during the process to provide live coverage of several joint City Council, Planning Commission, and Task Force work sessions on growth and land use issues, the Discussion Draft work sessions, and later on the Draft for Public Review of the General Plan. Final public hearings were also televised to the public.

## **1.7 THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The City's planning process includes monitoring and updating the General Plan and preparing of specific plans, resource management plans, neighborhood and special plans. An Annual General Plan Report will provide an overview of the status of the General Plan and its implementation programs.

**Amendments to the General Plan.** As the City's constitution for development, the General Plan is the heart of the planning process. It is intended to be a living document and, as such, will be subject to more site-specific and comprehensive amendments over time. Amendments also may be needed from time to time to conform to state or federal law passed since adoption and to eliminate or modify policies that may become obsolete or unrealistic due to changed conditions (such as completion of a task or project, development of a site, or adoption of an ordinance or plan).

State law limits the number of times a city can amend its general plan. Generally, no jurisdiction can amend any mandatory element of its general plan more than four times in one year, although each amendment may include more than one change to the general plan. This restriction, however, does not apply to amendments to:

- ▶ Optional elements (such as the Community Design or Economic Development chapters of the Chico General Plan);
- ▶ Allow development of affordable housing;
- ▶ Comply with a court decision;
- ▶ Comply with an applicable airport land use plan; or
- ▶ Implement a comprehensive development plan under the Urban Development Incentive Act.

**Specific Plans.** To provide specific direction for development in certain geographic areas, the General Plan calls for preparation of specific plans (for example, the Diamond Match site or the Airport Environs, east of Cohasset Road). The legal requirements for such plans are established in the Government Code, and topics to be addressed in each specific plan are listed in Chapter 3: Land Use.

The City Council may establish, and from time to time modify, a schedule of fees imposed for the adoption and amendment of specific plans. The City Council, after adopting a specific plan, may impose special fees upon persons seeking governmental approvals which are required to be consistent with the specific plan. Consistent with state law, these fees would cover the cost of preparation, adoption, and administering the plans.

**Resource Management Plans.** To protect sensitive biological resources, the General Plan requires preparation of resource management plans before any subdivision or development may be approved that would affect certain sensitive biological resources. The location of these resources are mapped, and the specific requirements for these plans are presented in Chapter 7. If these plans are prepared as part of specific plans, the City Council may establish fees to recoup plan preparation costs.

**Neighborhood and Special Area Plans.** The General Plan envisions that, in certain circumstances, neighborhood and special area plans may be prepared to provide specific design guidelines and standards for the conservation and enhancement of neighborhoods and other areas possessing distinctive features or character. Such plans may accommodate new development on infill sites and also provide for the gradual elimination of incompatible uses. Neighborhood and special area plans would be tailored to individual areas and may not necessarily address all of the topics required by state law for specific plans.

**Annual General Plan Report.** The Government Code requires that an annual report be submitted to the City Council on the status of the General Plan and progress in its implementation. This report also is to be submitted to the Governor's Office of Planning and

Research and the Department of Housing and Community Development. It must include an analysis of the progress in meeting the City's share of regional housing needs and local efforts to remove governmental constraints to maintenance, improvement, and development of affordable housing. In addition, mitigation monitoring and reporting requirements prescribed by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) should be addressed in the Annual Report because they are closely tied to Plan implementation. Finally, the Annual Report should include a summary of all General Plan amendments adopted during the preceding year and an outline of upcoming projects and General Plan issues to be addressed in the coming year, along with a work program and budget.

The Annual Report will be prepared by City staff during the early stages of the budget process and submitted for review to the Planning Commission, which will make a recommendation to the City Council. Public comments on the Annual Report may be submitted in writing to the Community Development Department. The Planning Commission and the City Council also will hear public comments on the Annual Report at duly-noticed public hearings.

**Five-Year Review.** The City will undertake a comprehensive review of the General Plan every five years after adoption. This review will include:

- ▶ Comprehensive evaluation of Plan policies;
- ▶ Analysis of the effectiveness of implementation programs and strategies initiated to carry out the Plan;
- ▶ Review of five-year growth trends and re-assessment of future urban land needs in light of the Planning Area's carrying capacity and available land inventory; and
- ▶ Systematic assessment of the resource-based thresholds, environmental standards, and resource management plans.

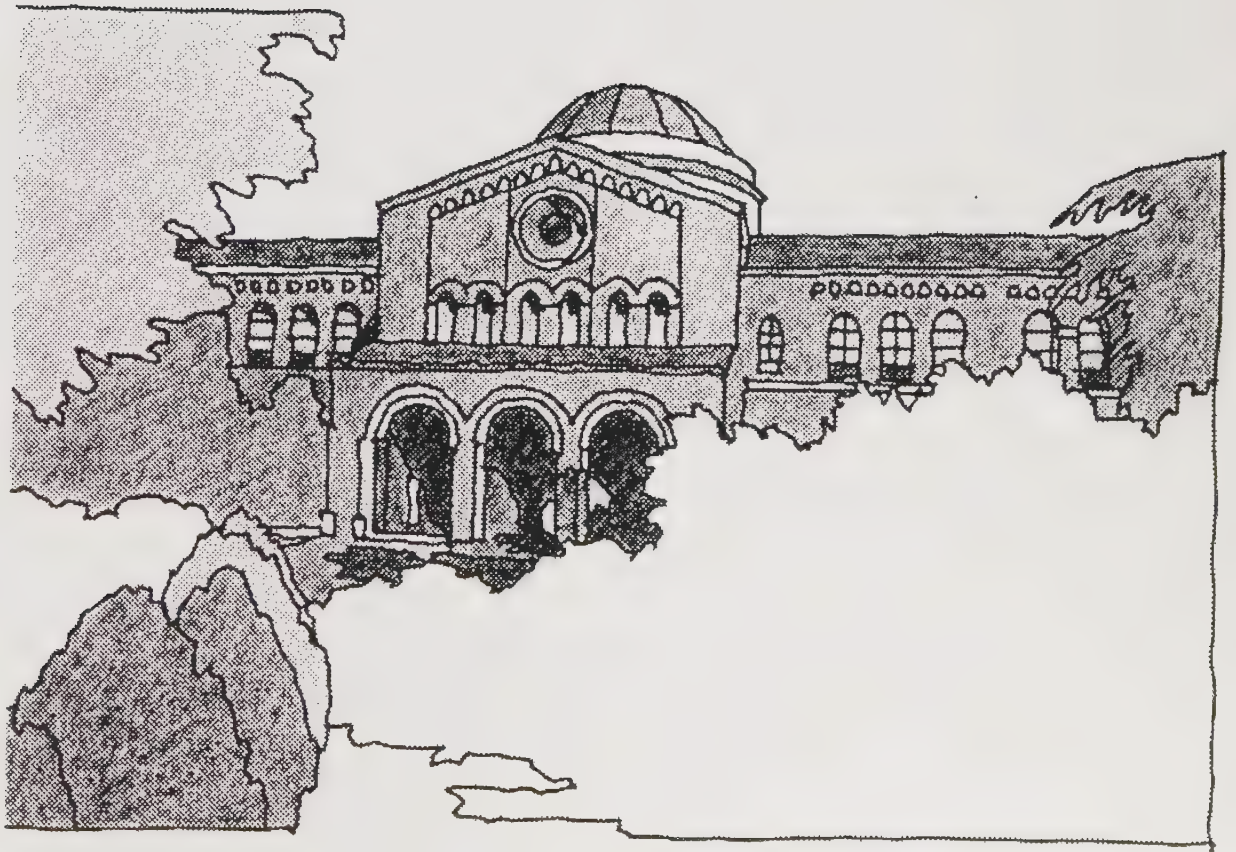
The focus of this five-year review will be to determine how well the General Plan has performed — whether policies related to development and environmental conservation have been effective. A report summarizing City staff's findings and recommendations will be circulated for public comment and then presented to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will review the report on the five-year review and make a recommendation to the City Council. The Planning Commission and the City Council also will hear comments on the report at duly-noticed public hearings.





# PART I

## COMMUNITY DESIGN







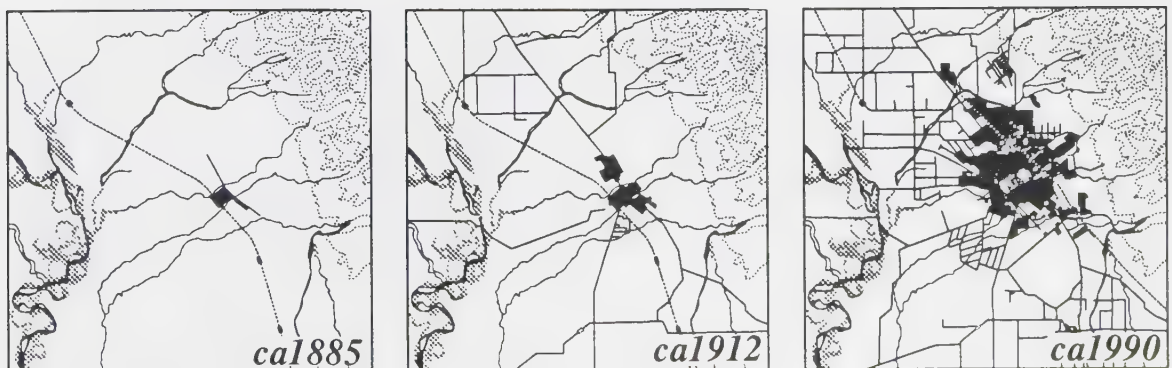




## 2 COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

Chico is a distinctive community, situated in the northern reaches of the Central Valley and interposed between the rich alluvial lands created by the Sacramento River and the volcanic buttes which form the edge of the Sierra foothills. Chico originally developed within a series of gridded streets aligned with the rail tracks, framed by the creeks which course through the city and sited within densely planted orchards and agricultural fields to the west (see Figure 2-1). It is a town whose civic tradition was established by the Bidwells at the turn of the century through their contributions to education, culture and recreation. Over the past hundred years or so, Chico has become a livable, amenable place, with walkable, tree-lined streets, a major region-serving park, accessible natural areas, a strong university presence, and an historic downtown. Somewhat removed from major urban growth centers, Chico combines the qualities of a friendly small town with the educational and cultural attractions of a big city.

This element builds on the positive qualities of Chico. It introduces policies aimed at protecting the natural resources of the City and enhancing its livability as it moves toward the 21st century. It embraces the concept of landscape preservation around the city and, in the tradition of Bidwell Park, encourages the extension of the sense of the landscape into the city. Within the city, the element advances the notion (carried through the entire General Plan) of encouraging a hierarchy of mixed-use districts that can create a model of neighborliness and the design of environments that discourage auto dependence and emphasize transit, pedestrian and bicycle movement.



**Figure 2-1: Growth of Chico Over Time**



### **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

Community design is of critical importance to decisions that are made regarding general growth and development, but under State law, community design is not a mandatory element of a General Plan and, where included, frequently has a limited focus. In Chico, a different approach has been taken, with community design taking a key position in the community planning process and establishing principles at the outset for the formulation of this plan element. Community discourse on the qualitative nature of the community was initiated by the City as a precursor to the General Plan Update and resulted in the Community Character Study, which framed many of the issues addressed in the General Plan.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

The Community Design Element is intended to influence the physical form of the community, and express an urban vision for the future. While other plan elements provide depth in specialized areas, such as transportation, housing and open space, the Community Design Element is more comprehensive in scope, and brings together many of the ideas that are discussed in other plan elements. The Land Use Element addresses policies related to the physical extent of urban development, residential, commercial, industrial, and public uses, density and intensity, the creation of neighborhood mixed-use districts and requirements for special development areas; the Transportation Element sets forth the functional characteristics of desired circulation patterns and specifically gives guidance for a greater focus on transit, pedestrian and bicycle movement; and the Open Space and Environmental Conservation Element establishes policies related to the integration of natural features within the community, protection of biological resources, and the use of open space for resource protection in new development.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Existing conditions related to community design are summarized in Section 3 of the Master Environmental Assessment.

The Community Design Element responds to issues and opportunities identified as a part of the General Plan process and in the Community Character Study. The element is organized to address the following topics identified as important to the character of the city as a whole:

- City Form
- Continuity and Connection
- Neighborhood Conservation
- Transitioning Districts
- Large-Scale Commercial and Industrial Projects
- New Residential Neighborhoods
- Landmarks and Public Art

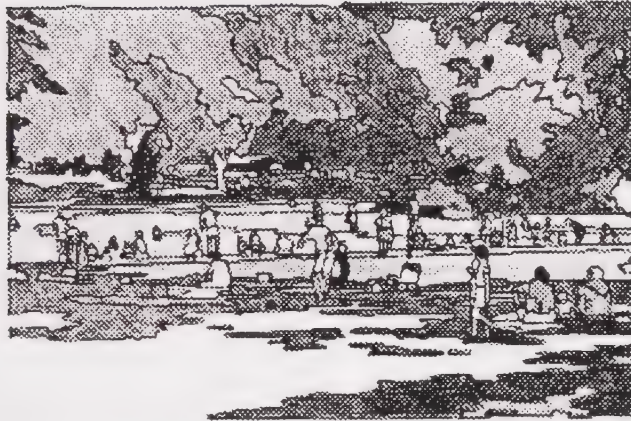
Consistent with other elements of the plan, this element provides guiding and implementing policies by specific topic area. In addition, accompanying text and diagrams provide additional guidance in an illustrative fashion, indicating how policies may be applied. *The diagrams and descriptive text are conceptual in nature. They are intended to expand upon the intent of the policies, providing examples and initiating discussion on potential solutions to identified issues.* They are not intended to be used as a specific design solution or as a mandatory requirement of the plan, nor should they be construed as a set of standards to be applied universally. Rather, each image and the text which follows each policy are included to illustrate possibilities to be considered with more specific studies. The entire element - its policies and illustrations - will be subject to more detailed study for implementation in specific areas.

The intention of the Community Design Element is to foster creativity and design excellence within the context of community values and adopted principles and objectives. In implementing the policies of this element, priority will be placed on the design of specific buildings, streets and open spaces that add to the livability and quality of the community as a whole.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles provide a basis for the Community Design policies as well as the subsequent elements of the General Plan:

**Heighten the sense of the natural landscape.** The identity of the city, to a great extent, comes from its landscape setting. Plan policies contained within this element, as well as others, provide for strengthening the visual and physical connection between the city and the surrounding landscape.



*Bidwell Park*

**Reinforce the unique identity of Chico.** Through purposeful acts of community building at the city's inception, Chico developed a strong identity as a city. The policies of this plan are intended to recognize and strengthen the fundamental elements that contribute to Chico's sense of "townness"—the pattern of streets and open spaces, focal points, entries, landmark buildings and clear edges.



*Alumni House*

**Emphasize the role of downtown as the heart of the community.** Downtown Chico plays an important role in the social as well as economic well being of the community. It is the symbolic centerpiece of the community and focus of civic life and social activity. Policies contained within this element provide for preserving and strengthening the role that the downtown plays in the community.





*Single family house,  
Downtown*

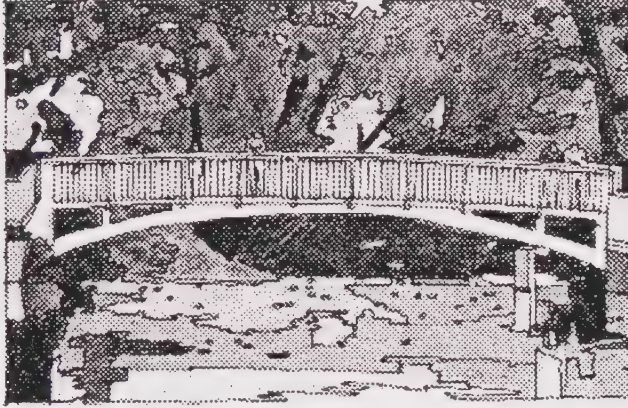
**Enhance the special qualities of existing neighborhoods and districts.** Chico's residential neighborhoods define, for most residents, the livability and attractiveness of the community as a whole. The individuality and distinct characteristics of the neighborhoods and their quality of life should be maintained and enhanced.



*Rail Depot*

**Reintegrate transitioning industrial and commercial districts.** The plan also sets forth policies for transitioning commercial districts to reestablish a more positive relationship with the surrounding city. Policies provide for the infill and revitalization of underutilized areas and encourage more attractive development.





*Pedestrian crossing,  
Big Chico Creek*

**Establish linking elements that provide continuity and connection within the city.** The plan policies provide for a clear and coherent system of green streets, creekways and linear open spaces that provide continuity and connection through the community. Guidelines emphasize the amenity of these linkages for pedestrians and bicycles as well as automobiles.



*Residential street*

**Reclaim streets as public space.** Streets comprise the major open spaces of cities and can be among the liveliest and most memorable public places within the community. Plan policies are aimed at balancing the need to facilitate auto circulation and parking with the desire for the street to play an important role in creating a sense of place.



*The Esplanade*

**Emulate the positive qualities of traditional Chico neighborhoods in new development.** Many older neighborhoods are distinguished by a clear organizational pattern, an interconnected network of tree-lined streets, and an attractive housing stock. Plan policies are aimed at building on these elements in new residential neighborhoods.

## 2.1 CITY FORM

Chico has long played a role as a center city within an agricultural landscape and as a focus of trade and commerce within Butte County. This civic role and importance within the region can be heightened through physical improvements to the form, structure and character of the city and a better definition of city edges and entries.

### Guiding Policies: City Form

CD-G-1 Reinforce the compact form of the city.

Chico has a relatively compact focus, contained for the most part within a four-mile ring extending from the railroad tracks near downtown. This “ring” (generally depicted in Figure 2-2) roughly circumscribes the outer limits of the urbanized area today and coincides with a number of natural and physical boundaries, including creeks, the railroad tracks, the foothills and powerlines. The “ring” does not perfectly describe present or desired future urbanization, since it excludes the employment center at the airport and some residential lands to the west of the railroad tracks. At the same time, it includes properties in the Midway and other areas which will remain in agricultural use in the future. The generally circular shape of development is useful as a conceptual diagram, that can be heightened to create a stronger sense of both the community and its landscape setting.

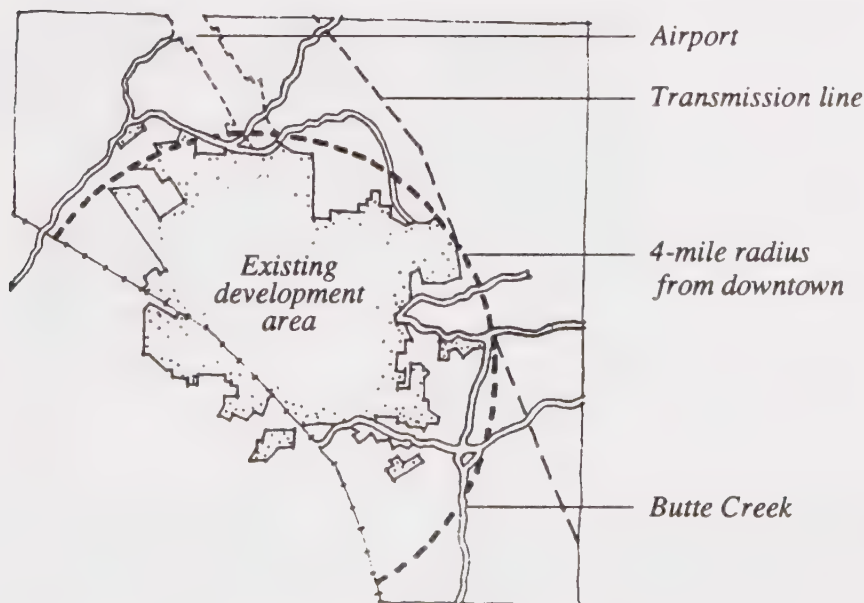
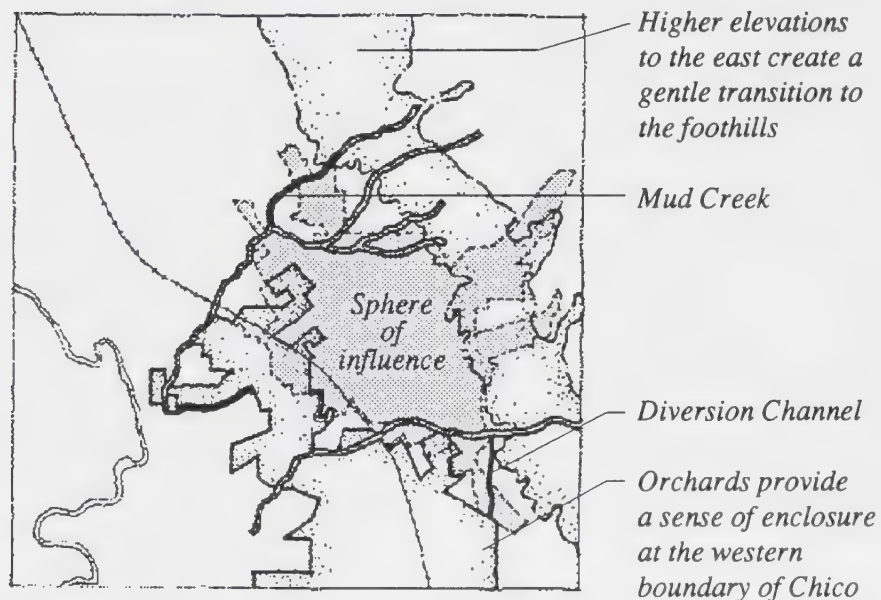


Figure 2-2: Elements of City Form

## CD-G-2

Create a clear definition of the physical extent of the city.

Sharpening the distinctions between natural and urbanized landscapes contributes to a sense of place. Natural and physical features, such as creeks, elevational changes, orchards and railroad tracks, as indicated in Figure 2-3 below, are important elements in creating a clear definition of the physical extent of the city. In the future, portions of Mud Creek, Little Chico Creek diversion, Butte Creek, and the transmission line corridor, as well as the foothills on the east and agricultural lands on the west, although not contiguous, will generally define the physical extent of the city.



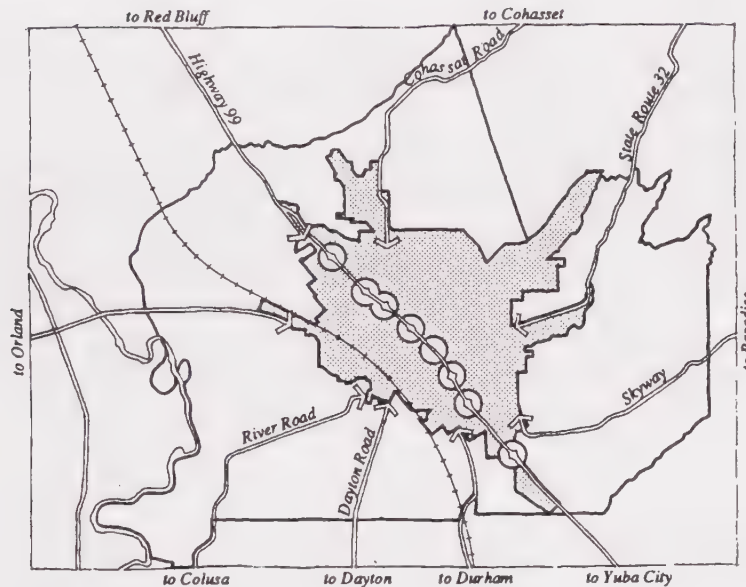
**Figure 2-3: Physical Edges**

## CD-G-3

Emphasize key city entrances.

As shown in Figure 2-4, there are a number of entrances (by auto and rail) that are important in establishing a sense of arrival and departure to Chico and in creating a stronger sense of regional identity. There is a clear difference in character between the entrances into Chico that come from the west, through the flat landscape of orchards and open fields, and the entrances from the east that come out of the volcanic foothills with expansive views out to the city of Chico. These differences should be maintained and the entries enhanced through the treatment of landscape and built form within these areas.





**Figure 2-4: Major City Entrances**

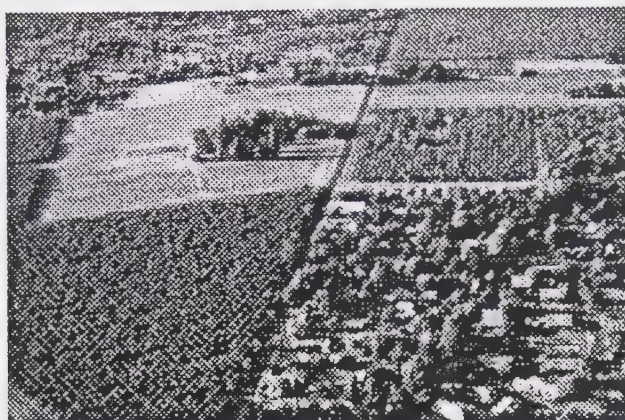
- CD-G-4** Minimize the intrusion of Highway 99 and its interchanges on the visual character and form of the city.

Although Highway 99 extends through the length of the city, segments are elevated and there are numerous interchanges and undercrossings. As a result, it does not divide the city as severely as freeways have in other California communities. Landscape improvements have been made along most of the freeway and should be completed so that the highway further recedes within the city.

### **Implementing Policies: City Form**

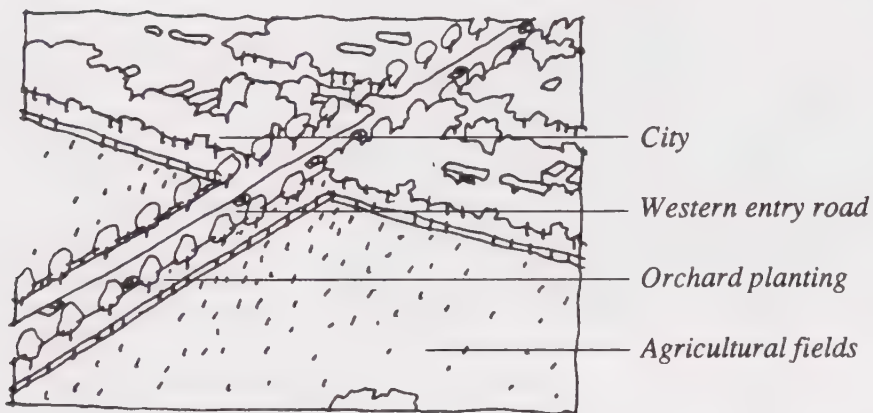
- CD-I-1** Study the feasibility of creating a greenbelt and a transition buffer zone between the more compact urban core and those areas outside the boundary of the city.

One of the ways to reinforce the form of the city is to establish a greenbelt. Particularly on the west side of the city, such a greenbelt or open space system should be explored. In other areas, appropriate buffers and transitions should be studied and appropriate standards established in the City's zoning ordinance. Details are provided in the Land Use Element (see especially Section 3.1, Growth and Expansion) and the Open Space Element.



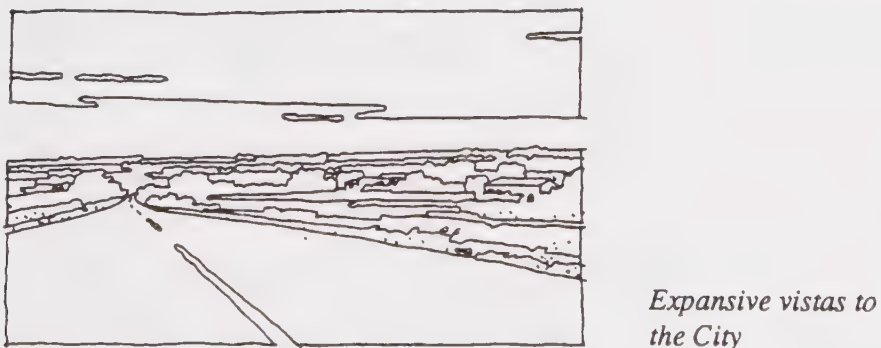
*Clear edges are necessary to visually distinguish urban and rural lands.*

- CD-I-2      Establish appropriate sections of State Route 32 and the Skyway as scenic routes, with design guidelines aimed at maintaining views in the foothills and the city.
- Maintain the successive unfolding of views to the foothills from the town and to the town from the foothills from key routes through design guidelines and standards related to setback, building height, color and materials as well as landscaping along these corridors.
- CD-I-3      Pursue public and private sources of funding for the implementation of the landscape improvements along Highway 99 and State Route 32.
- This could include state grants for the improvement of streets and highways as well as continued requirements for private developers to make landscape improvements at the time of development.
- CD-I-4      Extend the Master Landscape Plan for Highway 99 within the Planning Area where adjacent land is urbanized or proposed for urbanization.
- The Master Landscape Plan in effect today primarily addresses properties from the south of East Avenue to the Planning Area boundary. The plan could be extended to the north for a more continuous treatment along the entire length within the urbanized area.
- CD-I-5      Establish planting programs that extend the sense of the agricultural landscape at the western gateways to the city, and maintain a predominant sense of open land on the east.
- Plantings along key entry streets that recall orchard plantings should be encouraged at regularly spaced intervals, as illustrated conceptually in Figure 2-5.



**Figure 2-5: Entry to Chico from the West**

On the east side of town and in the foothills, trees should be planted in a more random and open fashion, and the height and massing of buildings should not obstruct open views to the foothills, Chico and the Central Valley (see Figure 2-6).



**Figure 2-6: Entry to Chico from East**

## 2.2 CONTINUITY AND CONNECTION

Clear and continuous linkages through the community reinforce a sense of community structure and orientation within the urban environment. Within Chico, there are several existing elements—the railroad, the highway, certain streets and the creek corridors—that can be enhanced and strengthened to provide paths of continuity and connection through the community.

### Guiding Policies: Continuity and Connection

- CD-G-5      Make improvements to the major corridors traversing the city to heighten their visibility and accessibility.

The major linear corridors are those that extend into and through the entire city. They primarily include the railroad, the creek corridors—Sycamore, Lindo Channel, Big Chico, Little Chico, and Comanche—and the primary street corridors—Esplanade/Park/Midway, Bruce Road, State Route 32, East Avenue, Eaton Road, Cohasset/Mangrove, and Skyway/East Park. These should be improved with streetscape improvements, planting and other treatments within limits of existing development or rights-of-way.

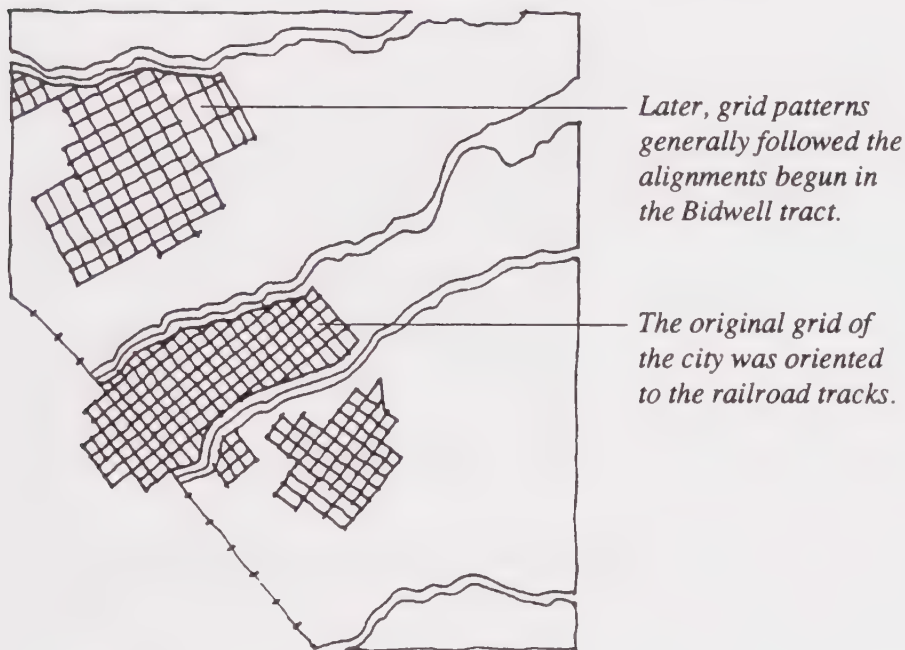
- CD-G-6      Design street and creekside improvements in consideration of their hierarchical role and function within the larger system.

It is important to visually convey the relative importance of each corridor. For instance, Bidwell Park gives Big Chico Creek prominence within the hierarchy of creeks, as does the Esplanade within the system of streets. These concepts need to be carried forth in the basic elements of civic design so that visual appearance is tied more closely to role within the organization of the city.

- CD-G-7      Extend new street patterns that heighten the sense of the creeks and are connected to existing patterns of development.

The physical patterning of the community can create a stronger orientation to the creeks as well as a framework for new development that provides for higher density neighborhoods. The historic grid pattern was generally aligned to the railroad tracks, as shown in Figure 2-7. New grid patterns do not necessarily need to be composed of straight, parallel streets with a repetitive scale and grain, but can integrate arching, straight and diagonal alignments, with allowances for topography and interruptions caused by the creeks. However, they should open up views and physical access to the creek environments.





**Figure 2-7: Grid Patterns**

- CD-G-8 Place restrictions on the overall scale and size of major arterials, so as to avoid creating barriers within the city fabric.

The overall dimension and treatment of streets greatly influences the character of a city and the nature of uses within it. For instance, limiting the paved dimensions of streets or the number of lanes within the carriageway are effective ways of ensuring that the functions of a street for traffic movement do not exceed the desires of the community for livable, pedestrian oriented streets. In Chico, streets do not need to exceed four lanes (not including turn lanes) to fulfill necessary traffic functions.

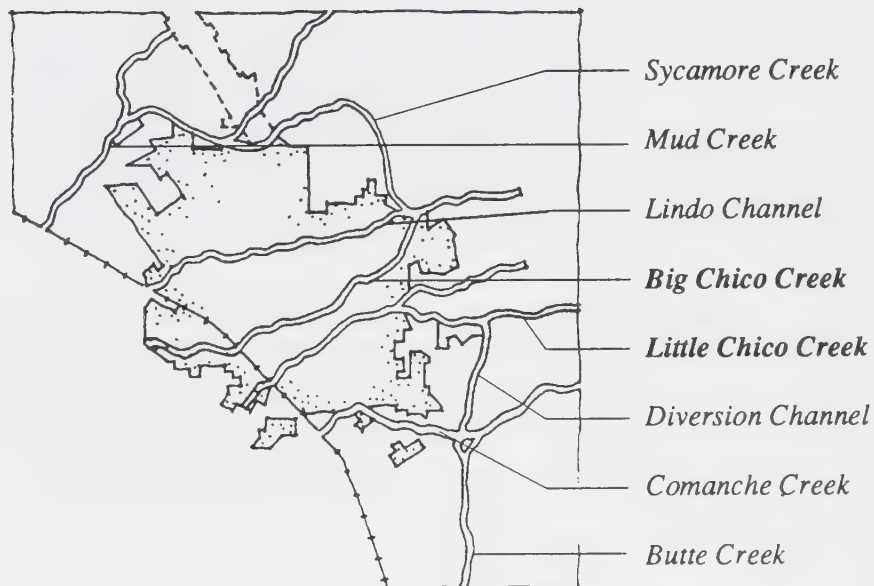
- CD-G-9 Establish special design guidelines for scenic roads.

Scenic roads are those which have a unique orientation and alignment or are notable for their landscaping and streetscape. Some of the streets which would fall into this category include the Esplanade (south of Lindo Channel), Vallombrosa, East and West Lindo Avenue, and Manzanita and Woodland Avenues. Design guidelines should be developed that build on their unique qualities. These streets would be limited to two vehicle travel lanes and, at least, in the case of Vallombrosa Avenue not include curbs or gutters in the ultimate street design.

CD-G-10

Heighten the visual prominence of the creek corridors which help to establish a sense of orientation and identity within the city.

Following the tradition begun by Bidwell Park, the creek corridors which traverse the city (see Figure 2-8) can be improved to give further identity to the city and create closer ties to the natural landscape. Enhancement of these creek corridors can include landscaping and mandatory setbacks for all new development to further contribute to the visual structure and ecological diversity of Chico.

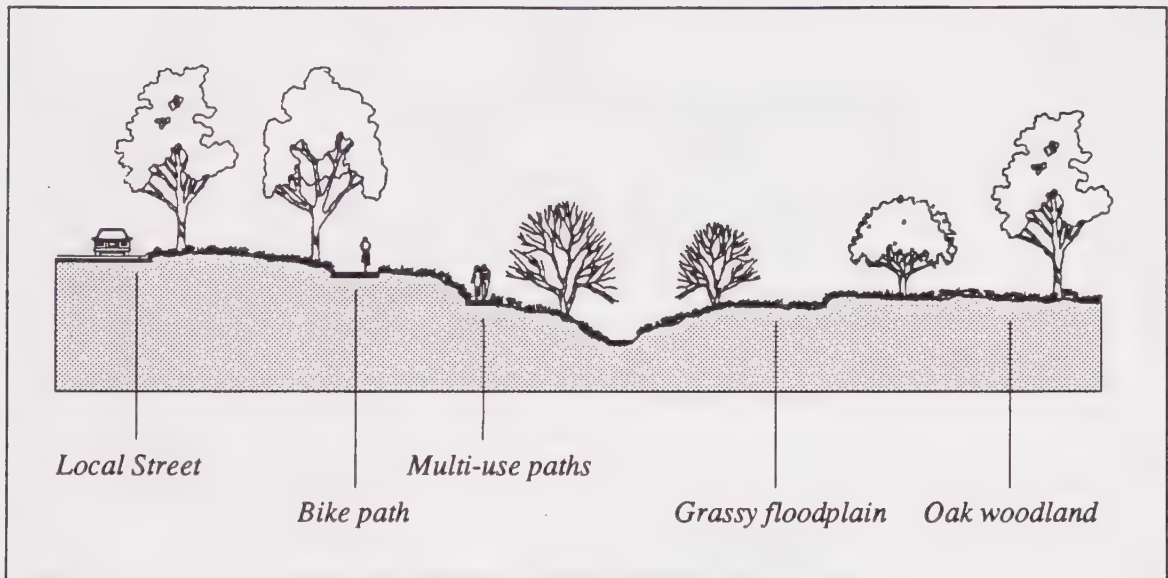


**Figure 2-8: Creek Corridors**

CD-G-11

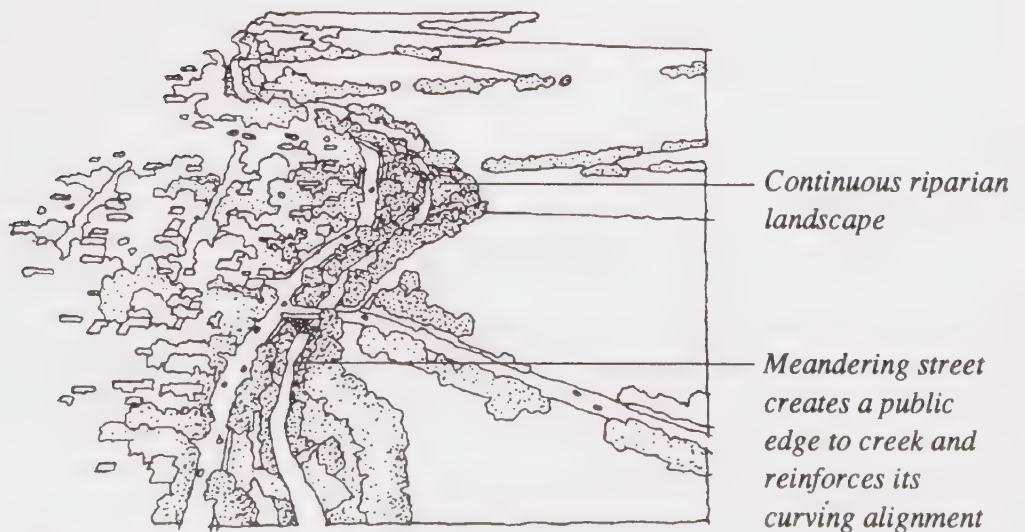
Open up creeks to public view and access.

The creeks can be made more visible and accessible by appropriate landscaping, frontage roads, and the alignment of streets which directly lead to creek corridors.



**Figure 2-9: Illustrative Creekside Treatment**

The possibility of developing creeks with one side more public and active and the other more passive and natural (Figure 2-10) provides opportunities to achieve both recreational and environmental objectives for these important areas. Such a treatment may not be possible in already developed areas, except through incremental opportunity purchases, but a new standard can be established in areas of new development.



**Figure 2-10: Creek Edges**

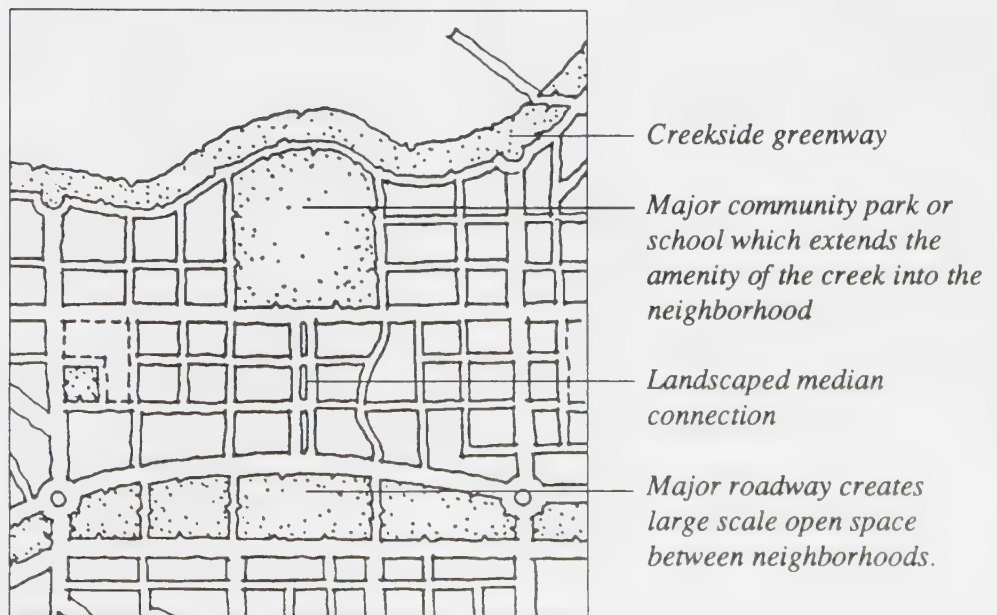
CD-G-12 Extend the amenity value of the creeks.

The creek corridors represent a significant amenity that should be made more public and visible.



*Creeks are important natural elements that contribute to the character of Chico.*

They should be extended back into the community through a “necklace” of connected open spaces (see Figure 2-11), creating a continuity of diverse recreational experiences.



**Figure 2-11: System of Interconnected Open Spaces**



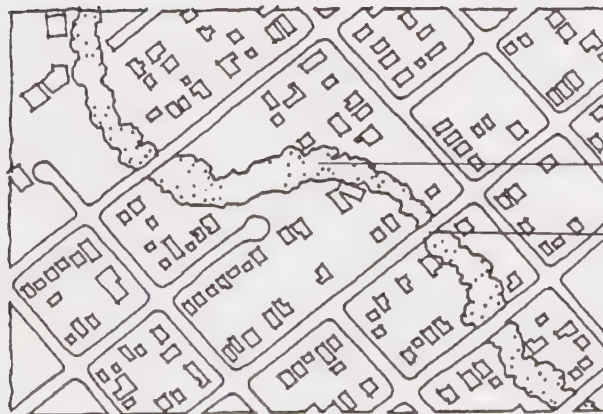
**CD-G-13** Within the developed core of the city, diminish the barrier effect of the creeks.

The barrier effect of the creeks within the urbanized city should be lessened and the creeks themselves made more visible and accessible. Creeks should become “seams” within the fabric of the city, not separators.



*Native oaks and riparian vegetation characterize Big Chico Creek and Bidwell Park.*

As shown in Figure 2-12, creeks within the existing city are frequently hidden from view and are only visible at periodic crossings. Bridges should be designed for bikes and pedestrians as well as autos and not hinder pedestrian and bicycle movement beneath them.



*The creek is hidden within the city grid*

*Creek crossings make the creek less of a barrier*

**Figure 2-12: Creek with City Grid**

## **Implementing Policies: Continuity And Connection**

CD-I-6 Adopt design guidelines for development adjacent to creeks.

These may include consideration for the following:

- Single-loaded streets along at least one bank
- Discouraging backup development along creeks
- Public access and visual easements to creeks
- Linkages to other open spaces and open space systems
- Trails for multi-use purposes such as pedestrians and bicyclists
- Planting for erosion control and riparian enhancement with native shrubs, groundcover, and tall riparian trees
- Benches, trash receptacles, lighting and pedestrian amenities, where appropriate

CD-I-7 Revise design standards for roads so that they reinforce the role of the street as a public space which organizes the city and provides corridors for the movement of transit, bicycles and pedestrians as well as autos.

This may apply to the design improvements for both existing and new streets, looking closely not only at the required traffic functions, but also at the desired character relative to surrounding neighborhoods and districts, and the opportunity to encourage increased bicycle and pedestrian movement. Streets may change in character as they traverse different districts, but they should have a sense of continuity along their lengths. Changes to the design standards of individual streets need to be preceded by traffic studies, as appropriate.

Design guidelines may require, as a minimum, the following:

- Streets that provide linkage, generally discouraging cul-de-sacs and street patterns that are fragmented or overly circuitous within the valley floor
- Streets that have continuity, with appropriate streetscape treatments (sidewalks and landscaping)
- Block sizes that are pedestrian in scale (e.g., no more than 500 feet in length) and encourage walking
- Conditions under which curb cuts for driveways are allowed and alleys encouraged

- CD-I-8 Explore the feasibility of developing a special design treatment along a “ring transportation corridor”, emphasizing public transit and pedestrian improvements.

The ring transportation corridor (connecting the Esplanade, downtown, Mangrove, Park Avenue, Cypress and Pine Street as generally illustrated in Figure 2-13 for discussion purposes only) could be distinguished by bicycle and pedestrian-friendly wide sidewalks and tree canopies, and mixed-use commercial development with a focus on sidewalk activity and higher density housing (along portions of the corridor).



**Figure 2-13: Possible "Ring" Transportation Corridor**

- CD-I-9 Review and, as appropriate, revise the Streetscape Master Plan.

The Streetscape Master Plan should be broadened to include consideration for the following:

- Provisions for bike trails and pedestrian routes
- Guidelines for treatment of the street edge
- Encourage parkway strips and innovative treatments which consider water detention (irrigation and drainage)
- Guidelines for parking and buildings adjacent to streets

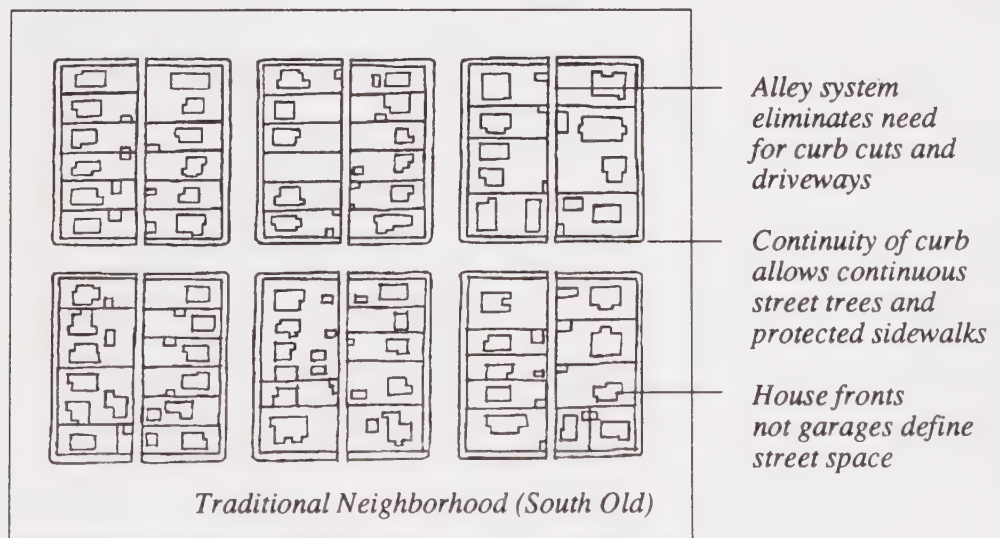
CD-I-10      Explore the use of a computerized inventory of street trees within the city.

A computerized inventory of trees is used in a number of cities to more accurately monitor management practices, and to provide ongoing information useful in continuing to upgrade and successfully expand the urban forest.



## 2.3 NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

From a community design perspective, the gracious residential neighborhoods that form the fabric of the community are one of Chico's greatest assets. Many of the older neighborhoods are comprised of finer-grained elements, i.e., tree-lined streets that are open and welcoming in character; block and street patterns that are scaled to the pedestrian and encourage continuity in movement; diversity in lot sizes and housing types; and an orientation to landmarks, open space and surrounding neighborhoods.



**Figure 2-14: Traditional Neighborhood**

### Guiding Policies: Neighborhood Conservation and Development

The following policies are aimed at reinvesting in these neighborhoods and protecting their livability and quality:

- CD-G-14 Reinforce the individual character of existing residential neighborhoods and districts.

Chico is comprised of a diversity of different neighborhoods and districts. Districts can be defined as larger portions of the city or non-residential areas distinguished by similar characteristics in use or intensity of use. Neighborhoods similar qualities,

such as geographic location, physical characteristics or clear boundaries. They may encompass several blocks and be distinguished by housing of a similar age, style, or type, or a focus on a specific community resource (creek, school, retail center, etc), or edge conditions (highway, creek, change in housing, etc.). The distinctions between neighborhoods and districts should be reinforced and programs established for neighborhood conservation and enhancement.

CD-G-15      Encourage neighborhood rehabilitation and improvement.

Some of Chico's neighborhoods are nearing a century in age—particularly those adjacent to downtown and associated with the first and second plattings of the city. While the scale, grain and pattern of these neighborhoods can be emulated, the maturity and abundance of street trees, detailing, use of materials and variety of house types are unique to their era, and have a lived-in appeal that are not easily replicated in new development. In some cases, these established neighborhoods are in need of improvement and reinvestment to continue to maintain the same degree of attractiveness and livability over the next century as they have in the past. This includes public actions, such as street or park improvements, as well as private actions related to building rehabilitation and renovation. *(For specifics, see Housing Element policies and programs on conserving and upgrading the existing housing stock (Policies 5.1 to 5.4 and program 28 to 35).*

CD-G-16      Protect and enhance the urban forest that reinforces the image and identity of the community and its older neighborhoods.

Chico's older neighborhoods have a special identity, gained to a great extent from a canopy of mature trees that contrasts the open fields and foothills and ameliorates the influence of the climate in hot summer months. While additions to the urban forest are important, it is equally important to protect and enhance the existing resource as it ages over time.

CD-G-17      Encourage positive transitions in scale and character where new development and extensive expansions of existing buildings are proposed.

The character of a neighborhood comes from the large-scale patterns of streets, house location and orientation, landscaping, front yard setbacks and garage locations, but it is also influenced by the relationships of adjoining residences to one another. When neighborhoods begin to be "infilled" or redeveloped with parcels of a much higher density or scale, it is important to ensure that the overall character is not destroyed. Specific attention needs to be placed on proposed parcel sizes, building footprint, heights, relationships to the street, and linkages to the surrounding neighborhood by foot.

## **Implementing Policies: Neighborhood Conservation and Development**

CD-I-11      Develop design guidelines for neighborhoods and districts.

Guidelines should be prepared to encourage high quality in design of residential neighborhoods. These guidelines should address the house and parcel, the street, the block, and the mix of densities and uses. Consideration should be given to:

- Neighborhood patterns (e.g., maintaining planting strips or characteristic curb and gutter conditions, following the pattern of garage locations, reducing the prominence of garages, minimizing driveways and curb cuts, maintaining visible front entries)
- Relationship to neighbors for privacy (e.g., second story additions; locations of windows, decks and balconies, landscaping, fences and exterior lighting)
- Relationship to new uses (e.g., parcel size, building bulk and footprint, fencing, upper floors, pedestrian access, street orientation, landscaping)
- Individual house design (e.g., simplicity of form, harmony of form and color, extent of blank walls, compatibility of roof slope, quality of finishes and materials)

CD-I-12      Pursue additional funding strategies for improvements to streets and for the development of new neighborhood and pocket parks within existing residential areas.

Smaller scaled neighborhood parks are appropriate for many types of recreational activities (e.g. play areas for small children, swimming pools, tennis courts, etc.) and may be possibly funded by a home owner's association or other such mechanisms. These smaller open spaces should be connected within the larger pattern of creekside greenways and Bidwell Park, establishing a necklace of open spaces within the city.

CD-I-13      Continue to pursue low-interest loan programs targeted to rehabilitation of older residential structures.

The City's current rehabilitation program, financed with Community Development Block Grant funds, should continue to be used to maintain and improve housing stock which cannot be replaced by standard modern construction practices. (See Housing Element Programs 30 and 31.)



CD-I-14

Support and guide the rehabilitation and reinvestment into existing residential buildings.

The City does make available low-interest loans for residential rehabilitation, and can provide a guide to rehabilitation with standards and guidelines consistent with the style and character of the house. (See Housing Element Programs 30 and 31.)



*Older houses often illustrate how a more positive relationship can be established between public and private areas.*



## **2.4 TRANSITIONING DISTRICTS**

There are a number of commercial and industrial areas that are undergoing change and transition in use and character. These include the historic downtown and Diamond Match as well as more recently developed commercial areas that have undergone decline as a result of changing merchandising and shopping trends and expanding retail developments near the freeway.

The downtown is an area of the city that has been transitioning for many years, as competitive shopping centers were built elsewhere in Chico. Diamond Match is an older industrial area that has declined in activity as a result of changes in industrial and transportation technology. Both of these areas include historic and cultural resources of potential value to the community. In addition to these two older districts are the auto-oriented commercial strips such as Park, Mangrove, Cohasset, East and Forest Avenues.

### **DOWNTOWN**

Chico's downtown provides a focus for the community and is the civic and cultural center of the city. The following policies are aimed at reinforcing the role of the downtown in community life and as a vital, people-oriented place.



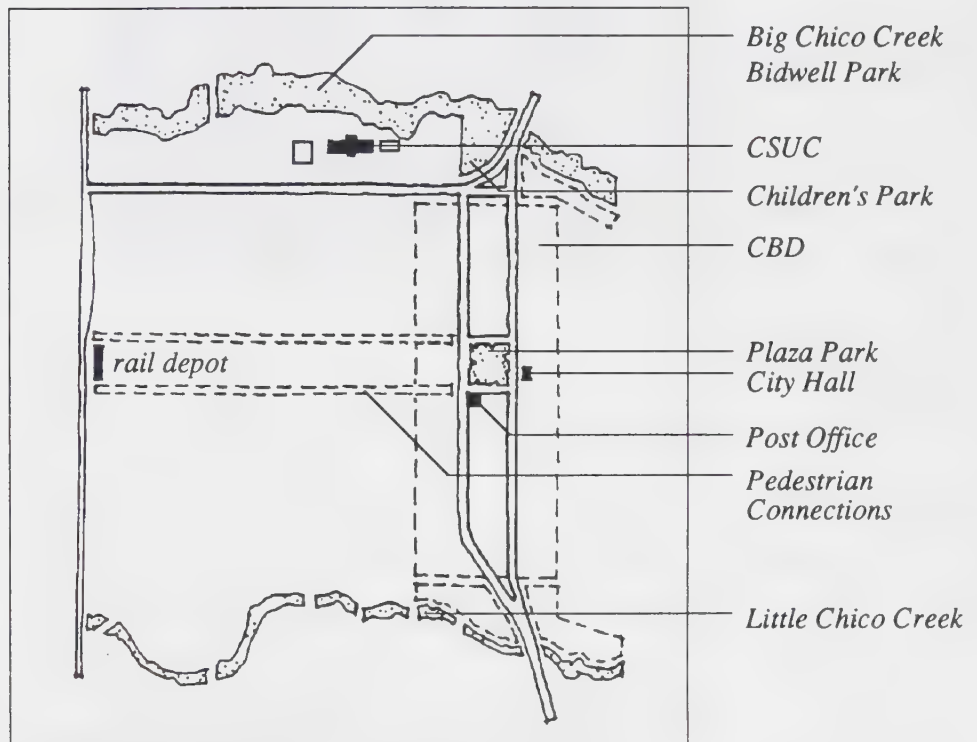
*Downtown still retains a strong pedestrian orientation and scale.*

### **Guiding Policies: Downtown**

CD-G-18 Reinforce the physical framework which defines the downtown district.

As shown in Figure 2-15, there are a number of key elements which help physically define the downtown as a district. Downtown is framed by Big Chico Creek, Bidwell Park and CSUC to the north, and Little Chico Creek to the south. In

addition, the Rail Depot and Plaza Park create two landmarks which are centrally located and frame the downtown on the west and east. These elements should be more prominent within the downtown, and more positive relationships (in terms of activity) should be developed.



**Figure 2-15: Downtown Framework**

CD-G-19 Encourage new development that is urban in scale, treatment and character.

New development should reflect in scale, character and pedestrian orientation the urban traditions of downtown.

CD-G-20 Encourage the preservation and enhancement of buildings of special historic and/or architectural interest.

Downtown has a concentration of buildings and landscapes of historic interest (e.g., Plaza Park and the Children's Playground). Its historic character contributes greatly

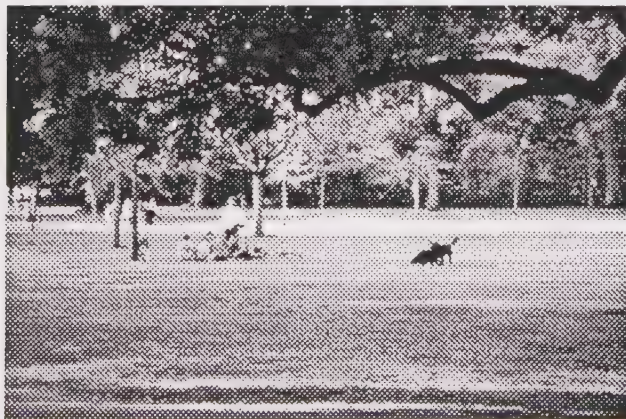
to the sense of place downtown, and efforts should be made to identify, preserve and enhance it.



*Aerial view, Chico*

CD-G-21 Maintain and enhance a strong pedestrian scale and orientation within the downtown through the design of buildings and streets.

Pedestrian-scale signage and ornamental lighting, continuous street trees, wide sidewalks, canopies, bicycle parking areas, public art and continuity of ground floor activity are among the elements to be emphasized in

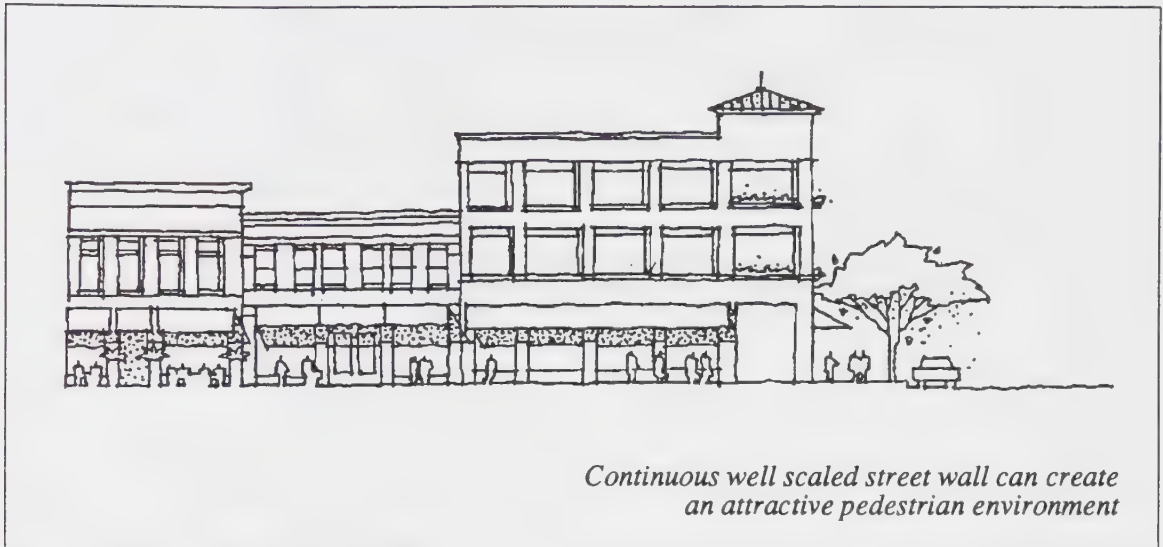


*Bidwell Park is a historic, cultural and recreational resource, of benefit to downtown and the surrounding community and region.*

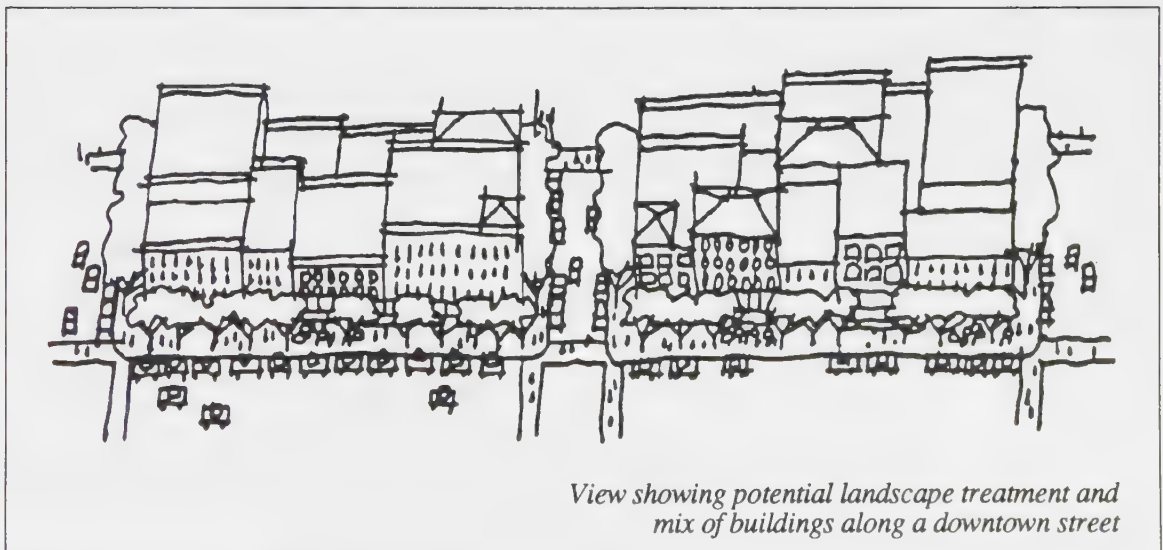
reinforcing the pedestrian character of downtown (see Figure 2-16). In addition, such measures as build-to lines, restrictions on surface parking, curb cut limitations and minimum building heights are useful in defining the “wall” of the street and in framing the activities which happen in public spaces. Figure 2-17, below, illustrates how landscape improvements and a continuous row of urban-density buildings



oriented to the street can contribute to a more attractive public environment. Specific design guidelines should be developed to define approaches best suited to downtown.



**Figure 2-16: Downtown Buildings**

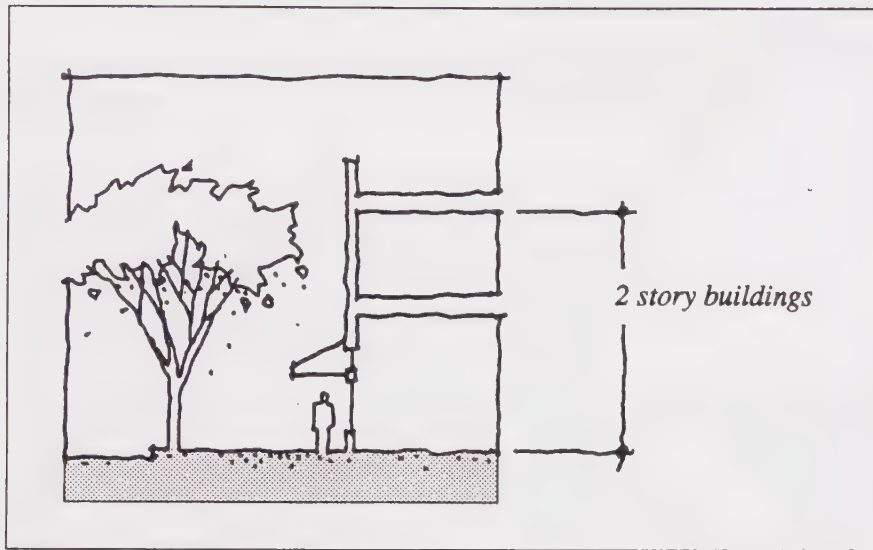


**Figure 2-17: Downtown Block**

CD-G-22 Encourage the development of buildings of a minimum height.

Buildings with a minimum height of two floors (see Figure 2-18) will provide a better scale relationship to the street with a greater potential for a vital urban environment.



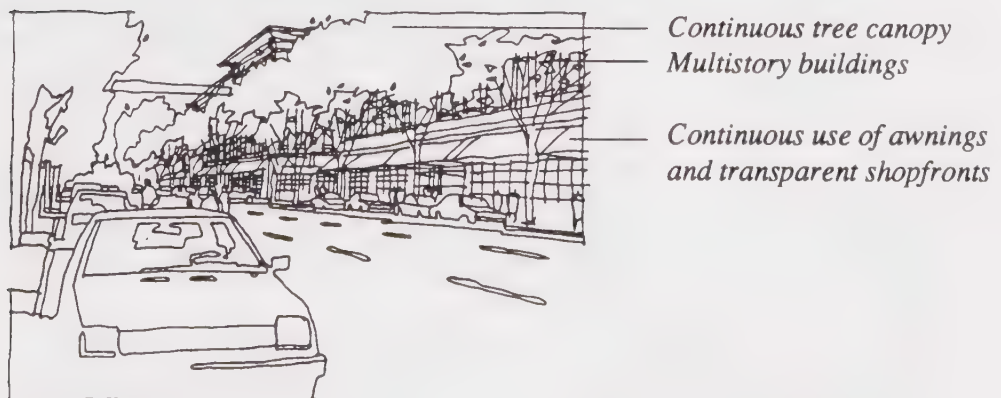


**Figure 2-18: Minimum Building Heights**

CD-G-23

Encourage a lively streetscape environment, with buildings and activities oriented to the street and sidewalk areas at ground level.

Buildings should be encouraged to incorporate ground floor treatments of interest to the pedestrian including, for example, the use of large windows, tall ground floor pedestrian entrances, canopies, arcades and sidewalk cafes (see Figure 2-19). The feasibility of establishing greater access and use of public rights-of-way in the downtown area should be explored.



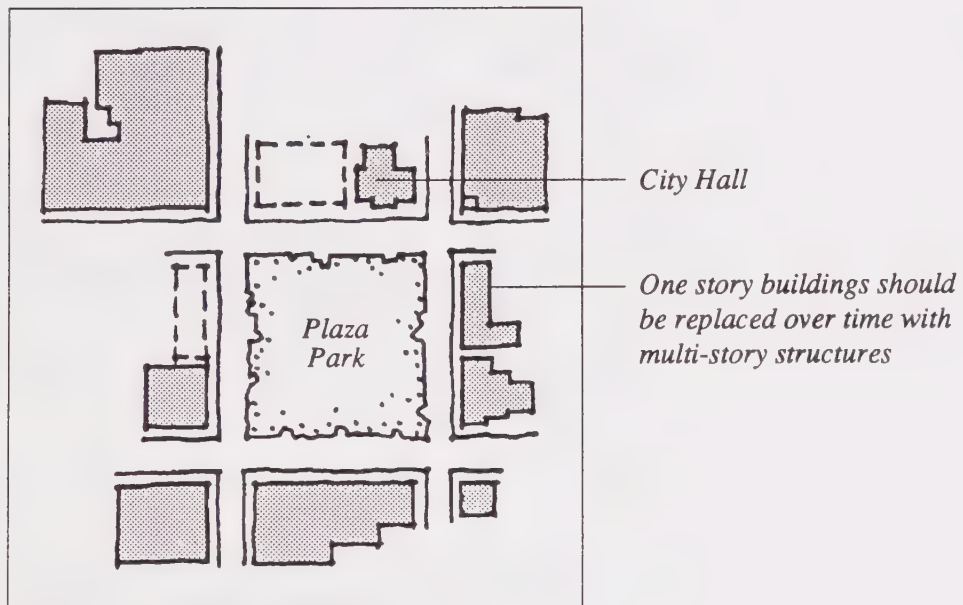
**Figure 2-19: Downtown Streetscape**

- CD-G-24      Reduce the perceived scale of downtown streets while allowing for appropriate circulation and parking.

Streets within the downtown are wide, and efforts to reduce their perceived scale would increase the attractiveness of the area and benefit the overall pedestrian and retail environment. Approaches such as widened sidewalks and landscaping at intersections and additional plantings between parking stalls and/or the establishment of managed streets should be explored.

- CD-G-25      Reinforce the role of Plaza Park as the civic and cultural heart of downtown.

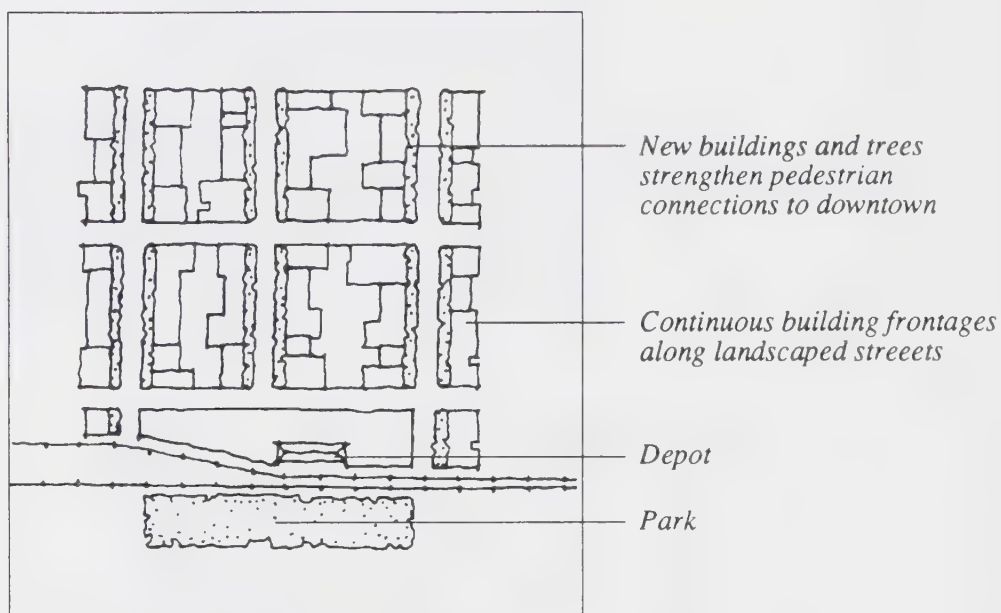
Plaza Park is a centerpiece of Chico's downtown—a town square established in the best of urban traditions (see Figure 2-20). The park itself needs to be improved in appearance and programming extended with events and activities. At the same time, development surrounding the plaza should be designed with a greater formality and scale which reflect the plaza's prominence as the civic and cultural center, using construction materials and colors to connect it with the character of the region.



**Figure 2-20: Plaza Park Area**

CD-G-26 Create stronger visual and physical connections to the Rail Depot.

The Rail Depot was historically the principal point of entry and arrival within the city, and today continues to be used for passenger service. Its historic role and future potential to be more closely linked to Plaza Park at the other end of downtown should be emphasized through design guidelines and development standards which emphasize a more continuous urban fabric and an improved streetscape (see Figure 2-21).



**Figure 2-21: Rail Depot District**

CD-G-27 Maintain the scale and fine-grained fabric of the downtown.

The block and parcel sizes of development in the downtown help create a pedestrian environment that is attractive to visitors and residents alike.

CD-G-28 Establish a more positive relationship to the creeks within downtown.

Specific opportunities exist in the downtown for reorienting development to the creeks—in particular Big Chico Creek. Rather than turning away from the creeks and locating parking lots and storage areas along them, cafes, plazas and activities which focus on these resources and create active public spaces should be encouraged.

CD-G-29 Improve the physical linkages to the University and Bidwell Park through creek crossings, trails, and other bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

The University is a major activity area which supports the downtown. Bidwell Park is an important open space corridor. Linkages to the University and Bidwell Park



should be expanded for pedestrians and bicyclists so that the downtown continues to benefit from the patronage of faculty, students and visitors as well as others in the community and surrounding neighborhoods.

- CD-G-30 Encourage special events, festivities and celebrations within streets and public spaces.

Streets and other public spaces within the downtown should be designed and programmed so that they can be utilized for seasonal celebrations and special day and nighttime events. Cultural arts and special events programming and the ongoing management and maintenance of public spaces (including streets) can possibly be guided by the Fine Arts Commission, or other volunteer and City staff effort, and will help to provide an additional attraction within the downtown.



Brad Perry

*Summertime event at Plaza Park.*

### **Implementing Policies: Downtown**

- CD-I-15 Prepare an Action Plan which establishes a clear vision and specific direction for the downtown.

An Action Plan for the downtown should be prepared to identify the priorities, tasks and funding mechanisms necessary to achieve concepts for downtown revitalization and enhancement.



*City Hall creates an attractive landmark within downtown.*

- CD-I-16 Identify specific public projects that can become catalysts to revitalize the downtown.

Large-scale projects, particularly those that are public in nature, such as Chico's City Hall expansion, can be a catalyst for positive change. Properly designed, they can be used to set in motion a series of improvements to the downtown.

- CD-I-17 Discourage street vacations and block assembly, except for special projects of a civic nature.

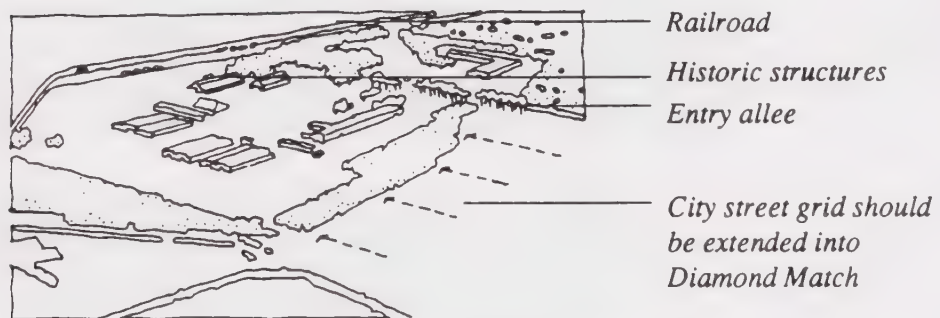
Street vacations and block assembly for large development projects would take away from the fine-grain scale of the downtown and threaten its unique position in relation to large-scale auto-oriented shopping centers at the fringes. Where they occur for special projects, through-block bicycle and pedestrian linkages should be developed.

- CD-I-18 Establish an incentives program for building to the current height limit.

Incentives for intensifying uses and increasing building heights should be explored. More specifically, provisions for upper floor uses, live/work units, and adaptive reuse of older buildings should be considered. In addition, a program for preserving and enhancing building facades should be explored. A downtown design manual should be prepared, in consideration of the existing streetscape plan.

## DIAMOND MATCH

Diamond Match is an important site within the city, not only because of its size, but also because of its past significance. As one of the largest urban infill opportunities within the area, it is important to establish a strong physical framework for reuse of the site (see Figure 2-22).



**Figure 2-22: Key Elements of Diamond Match**

### Guiding Policies: Diamond Match

CD-G-31 Encourage preservation and reuse of identified historic structures within the Diamond Match site.

Four buildings of architectural interest or historic value have been identified by the City: the Apiary Building, Carpenter Shop, Lumber Warehouse, and Engineering Building. These should be incorporated, as feasible, into redevelopment plans for Diamond Match.



*Masonry and heavy  
timber buildings at  
Diamond Match.*

CD-G-32 Create positive linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Diamond Match has long-established ties to the adjacent Barber neighborhood. It was named for a previous Chairman of the Board of the Diamond Match Company and once primarily housed its employees. Diamond Match needs to be physically reunited with the adjacent neighborhoods and tied more closely to them by extending existing streets and emulating the scale and grain of the neighborhood block patterns.





*Well landscaped streets should be extended to complete the pattern at Diamond Match.*

CD-G-33 Reinforce a strong landscape treatment and gateway to the site.

A strong entry statement should be made in keeping with the character of the palm-lined boulevard along West 16th Street.



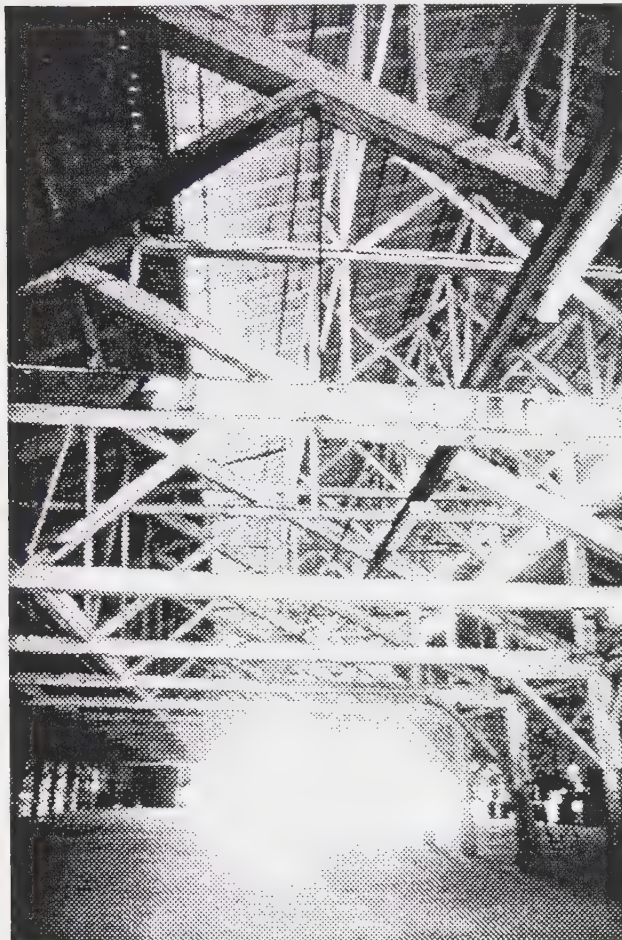
*Washingtonia palms line entrance to the site.*

CD-G-34 Encourage a positive connection and orientation to Comanche Creek.

Although it does not immediately adjoin the property, nearby Comanche Creek should be brought into the overall plan for reuse of Diamond Match through the development of streets and open space connections, where feasible.

- CD-G-35 Provide for cultural, community or historic orientation, as feasible, in the reuse of Diamond Match.

The reuse of existing buildings could take place in such a way that they incorporate public oriented activities.



*Interior of lumber warehouse,  
Diamond Match.*

### **Implementing Policies: Diamond Match**

- CD-I-19 Support a formal community planning process that sets forth specific guidelines and criteria for planning the site.

A formal planning process involving the City, Butte County, LAFCo and property owners (subject to the site's jurisdiction within the Urban Area), and with the active participation of the community and neighborhood, should be undertaken.

## COMMERCIAL STRIPS

There are several commercial strips within Chico where relatively small, auto-oriented developments (“mini-malls”) have been built over the past ten to fifteen years. With the expansion of retail developments elsewhere, some have experienced difficulty in attracting and keeping tenants. As uses begin to change along these arterials, there may be opportunities for infill development incorporating a broader mix of uses.



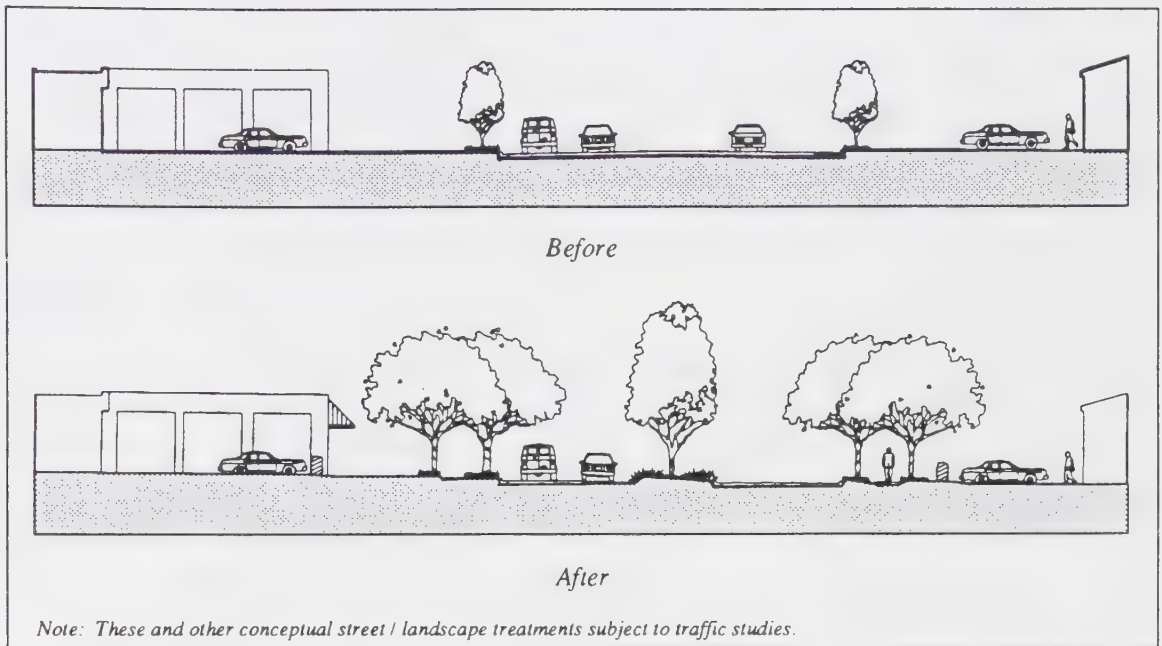
*Commercial strip along major arterial.*

### Guiding Policies: Commercial Strips

CD-G-36 Support beautification of Chico’s commercial strips.

Commercial strip development will be limited in the future; however, the viability and physical condition of existing strips continues to be a concern. In planning for the long-range future, it is important that provisions be made to improve the overall appearance of the streets and the commercial projects which they support. Guidance is needed to realize incremental change and improvement over time. Potential treatments, as shown conceptually on Figure 2-23, could include additional landscaping and street trees, adding or widening sidewalks, bulbing the sidewalks in key locations providing pedestrian-scale lighting, and orienting buildings to the street.





**Figure 2-23: Commercial Strips**

CD-G-37 Encourage infill and adaptive reuse of transitioning commercial developments.

Many commercial projects in cities experience a transition as a result of changing lifestyles, competing projects and developments, purchasing patterns, the distribution of merchandise and innovations in transportation and communication. As these changes occur, opportunities for new uses within existing buildings (i.e. adaptive reuse) are created. The typical mini-mall development is oriented to the street with parking in front. Future opportunities may be to reorient development and provide for new uses which can more fully contribute to the vitality, attractiveness and overall viability of the area. Infill development should result in a more positive orientation to the street, with the emphasis on punctuating important intersections, with taller buildings and wider sidewalks and screening parking areas generally from view of the street.



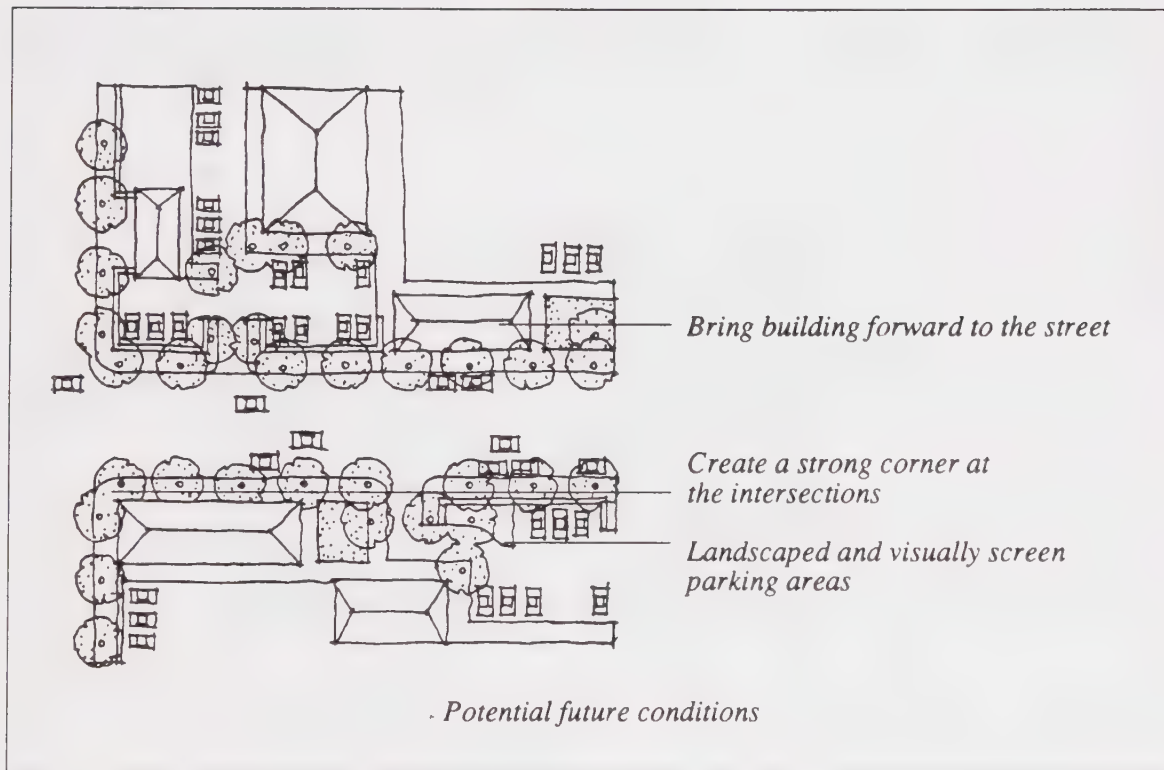


Figure 2-24: Commercial Strip Development

### Implementing Policies: Commercial Strips

CD-I-20

Identify potential early action projects for infill along commercial strips.

Since the commercial strips lack a consistent character, it may be difficult to establish a single treatment to address community design issues. Furthermore, accomplishing widespread transformation of an entire street or streets may be infeasible or simply unrealistic, considering limited public funds and the complexity of ownerships and parcelization. As an alternative, the emphasis should be on incremental change on a project-by-project basis. The City should work with interested parties and property owners to support reuse and development. These individual projects should be conceived as catalysts that can help bring about a change in character and trigger other positive changes along the street.

- CD-I-21      Revise the zoning ordinance to support mixed-use rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Changes to the zoning ordinance would need to include parking access and open space requirements, opportunities for shared parking and live/work, SRO, and other high-density prototypes. In addition, special attention should be given to the creation of positive relationships to surrounding neighborhoods.

- CD-I-22      Encourage the establishment of street improvement plans for the physical upgrading of commercial strips.

Improvements to the streets may include additional landscaping, lighting and pedestrian/bicycle amenities, restrictions on curb cuts, and inclusion of landscape setbacks and screens to parking areas. A funding strategy should be considered to guide the development of street plans and help set priorities for the implementation of planned improvements.



*Commercial Strip*

## 2.5 LARGE-SCALE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS

Commercial and industrial projects have increased in size and scale over time, with buildings in some projects exceeding several hundred thousand square feet. In Chico, more than one million square feet of commercial space have been added to the city's inventory over the past six or seven years, much of which is on sites greater than 20 acres in size. These large-scale, single-use projects present some special challenges to design. The following policies are aimed at creating commercial and industrial projects that relate more positively to the surrounding context, are of a scale and character that is attractive and accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists as well as motorists, and which allow for intensification and diversification to occur over time.



*"Big box" retail at Highway 99 interchange.*

### Guiding Policies: Large-Scale Commercial and Industrial Projects

CD-G-38 Encourage site and building design to respond to the context and potential linkages to surrounding areas.

A sensitive integration of large-scale projects should be encouraged by master planning larger districts; designing for pedestrian, bike and transit access directly from streets and surrounding areas; carefully addressing issues of scale and massing; respecting view corridors and vistas; integrating community and cultural uses; and achieving higher standards for environmental quality through innovative storm drainage and planting design.

- CD-G-39 Encourage consideration of pedestrian and bicycle access in new commercial and industrial projects.

New commercial and industrial projects should not be designed exclusively for the convenience of motorists, but rather, approaches that consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists as well as those arriving by transit should be a part of each project. While this may not be considered important today, by building in flexibility, future opportunities will not be foreclosed.

- CD-G-40 Encourage a human scale in the design of large-scale projects.

The perceived overall size of large projects (see Figure 2-25) should be mitigated to the extent possible through, for example, sensitive massing, appropriate scaling of building facades, articulation and organization of buildings, the use of color and materials, and the use of landscape screening.



**Figure 2-25: Highway Commercial Development**

- CD-G-41 Encourage the use of high quality materials and finishes in buildings.

The use of materials which tend to exaggerate the contrast between indoor and outdoor spaces should be discouraged.



CD-G-42      Encourage innovative site design and treatment of surface parking areas.

Surface parking areas should be organized and treated in such a fashion as to avoid the appearance of a “sea of asphalt.” Landscaping should meet or exceed, if possible, the 50 percent shading requirement now instituted by the City, with large trees planted throughout the parking area as well as along the street and sidewalks. The use of porous paving and the integration of drainage features should be encouraged for reasons of environmental quality and to improve the visual appearance of parking areas, which are often more intrusive than the buildings they are intended to serve.

CD-G-43      Encourage infill and intensification over time.

Infill and intensification of existing projects should be encouraged to achieve a greater mix and intensity of uses. The site planning for large commercial projects should anticipate the potential for future structured and shared parking as well as convenient and effective transit service that would facilitate intensification and help to create focal points of activity (see Figure 2-26).

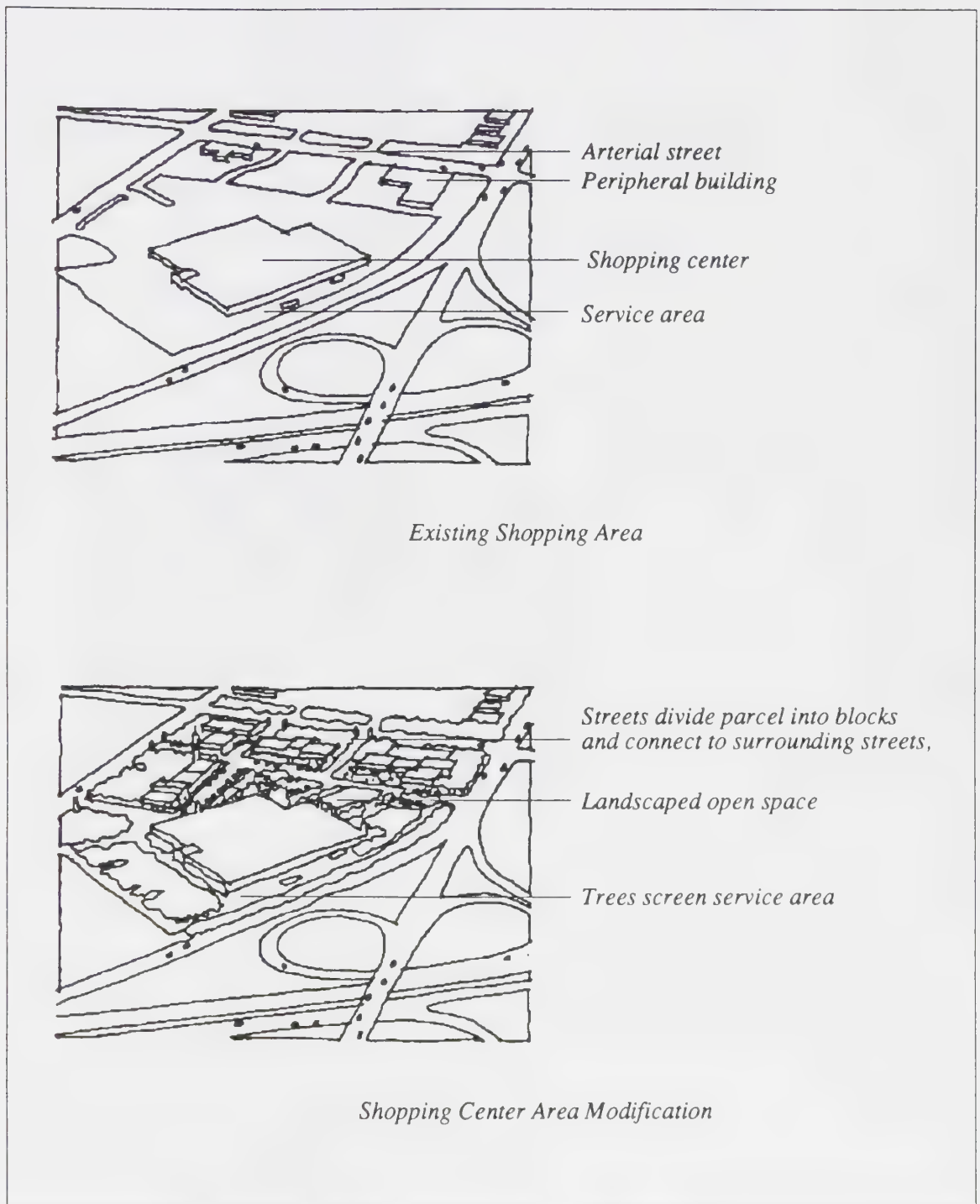
CD-G-44      Encourage simple design in consideration of future adaptation to new uses.

Commercial and industrial uses are rapidly undergoing change. It is important that investments into new facilities consider potential future adaptations to new uses, to the extent feasible.

CD-G-45      Incorporate design features that foster a sense of security.

Such features may include:

- Landscaping, parking lot access and pedestrian circulation improvements that facilitate surveillance from the street and from neighboring structures
- Limited access to roofs
- Visible and well-lit building names and street numbers for easy identification



**Figure 2-26: Regional Shopping Center**

## **Implementing Policies: Large-Scale Commercial And Industrial Projects**

- CD-I-23      Revise, as appropriate, development standards and develop specific design standards for commercial and industrial areas.

The zoning ordinance should be revised as necessary, and design guidelines refined to more clearly guide design and development review.

- CD-I-24      For large projects, require special visual studies as a part of design review.

Visual simulations that accurately depict the appearance of the proposed project should be required of commercial or industrial buildings with a floorplate in excess of 50,000 square feet. These simulations would be useful in demonstrating the implications of massing, scale, bulk, facade treatment and color in the context of the surrounding community or landscape.

## 2.6 NEW RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

New residential neighborhoods will be formed as Chico continues to grow and expand over the next twenty to thirty years. These neighborhoods should be designed so that they build on the positive qualities of Chico neighborhoods and districts with strong physical and visual linkages to surrounding areas. To do so, special care needs to be taken in the design of:

- Streets and entries
- Development pattern
- Development increment or scale (blocks, neighborhoods, districts)
- Mix of activities and densities
- Small-Lot Housing
- Buildings



*An attractive, well landscaped residential street.*



The following policies may apply to redevelopment within existing developed areas as well as to new development in undeveloped areas:

### **Guiding Policies: New Residential Neighborhoods**

CD-G-46      Create new neighborhoods that have a human scale and are oriented to the pedestrian.

Neighborhoods with a pedestrian scale are those where the length of blocks is not too long (e.g. not greater than 500 feet), streets are not excessively wide, houses front onto the streets with gracious transitions from indoor to outdoor spaces, and pedestrians can walk protected from traffic and the sun in summer months by a continuous canopy of trees.

CD-G-47      Establish clear and distinctive neighborhood edges, organized around larger streets and natural features such as streams or creeks.

As with the city as a whole, it is important to give definition to individual neighborhoods by establishing clear and distinct edges and clustering neighborhoods within larger districts organized around schools, parks, and other community facilities.

CD-G-48      Mark major entries to neighborhoods, but discourage the use of high walls and gated entries which isolate areas from one another and create an unfriendly appearance.

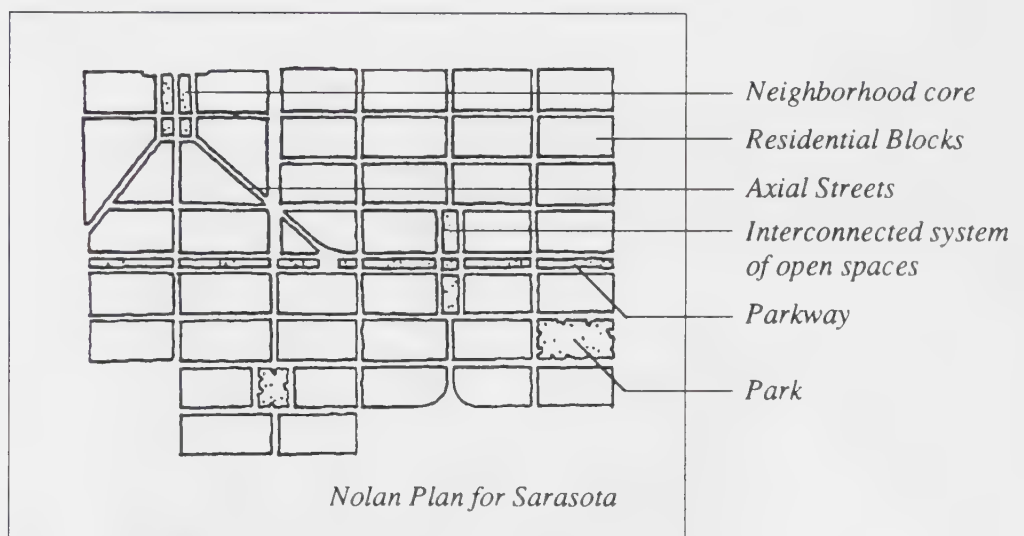
Major entries to neighborhoods should be recognized through the use of monuments, gateways, and other such elements incorporated within the broader streetscape. However, these should appear to be welcoming in nature and not convey the image of an exclusive district, set apart and isolated from other parts of town.

CD-G-49      Establish a central focus within each neighborhood.

The mixed-use neighborhood core is an important element in providing an activity center to each neighborhood; they should be located in a geographically central position, combining activities that are both publicly oriented and commercial in nature.

- CD-G-50 Encourage a fine-grained and integrated pattern of streets that provides continuity, focus, diversity, and a human scale.

The grid pattern is characteristic of older areas of Chico and works well as a basic pattern, providing continuity and clarity of structure. Diversity and complexity can be added to this basic fabric with the introduction of diagonal, axial and curvilinear patterns to emphasize special places and focal points (see Figure 2-27).



**Figure 2-27: Elements of Neighborhood Structure**

- CD-G-51 Encourage the continuity of streets between neighborhoods.

To increase the accessibility and connectedness of neighborhoods, and to support pedestrian as well as vehicular movement, block lengths should be limited (e.g., to 500 feet) and four-way intersections encouraged.

- CD-G-52      Orient neighborhoods and individual residential and commercial buildings positively to the street, not away from it.

Innovative approaches to the need for privacy and noise protection are needed, without resorting to the conventional solution of high walls. For instance, along major arterials, broad setbacks and alleys or frontage roads should be considered instead of high walls to provide protected residential areas that are open and accessible to all.



*Urban parks should be linked to larger regional open spaces*

- CD-G-53      Establish a hierarchy of streets, open spaces and community buildings that can be used to help provide structure and orientation to the neighborhoods and districts.

A differentiated hierarchy of elements (parks, open spaces, creekways, streets) should be carefully conceived as a part of neighborhood design.

CD-G-54 Design streets with a priority on neighborhood structure and pedestrian scale.

To create more attractive and meaningful street environments, the following should be encouraged (see Figure 2-28):

- Pavement widths (curb to curb) to the minimum necessary
- Continuous and consistent street tree planting adjacent to the curb
- Continuous, unbroken curb lengths
- The use of alleys, subject to appropriate standards

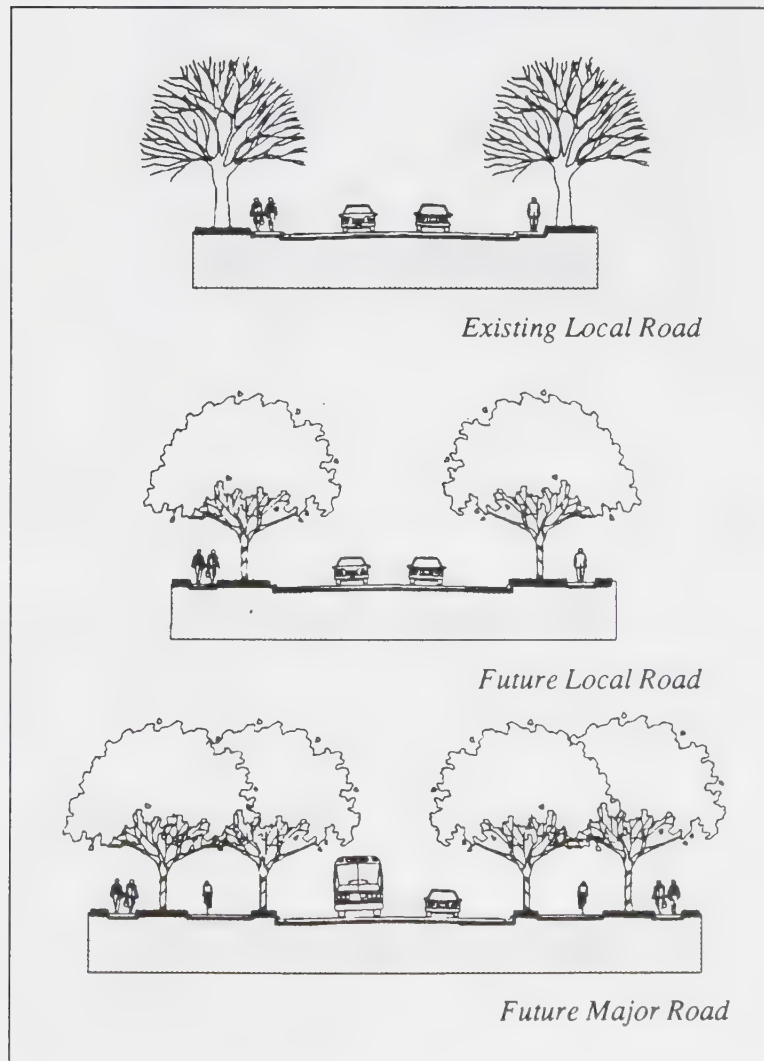


Figure 2-28: Illustrative Residential Streets



- CD-G-55 Integrate special features as landmarks to heighten a sense of orientation within new residential neighborhoods.

Chico has an abundance of unique natural features surrounding and within the city, such as creeks, remnant orchards, heritage oaks and rock walls. These should be incorporated in a positive fashion with development to heighten an understanding and appreciation of the landscape and to help establish a sense of place.



*Rock walls are a characteristic element in the foothills.*

- CD-G-56 Encourage tree planting and consider adopting a heritage tree preservation and maintenance program.

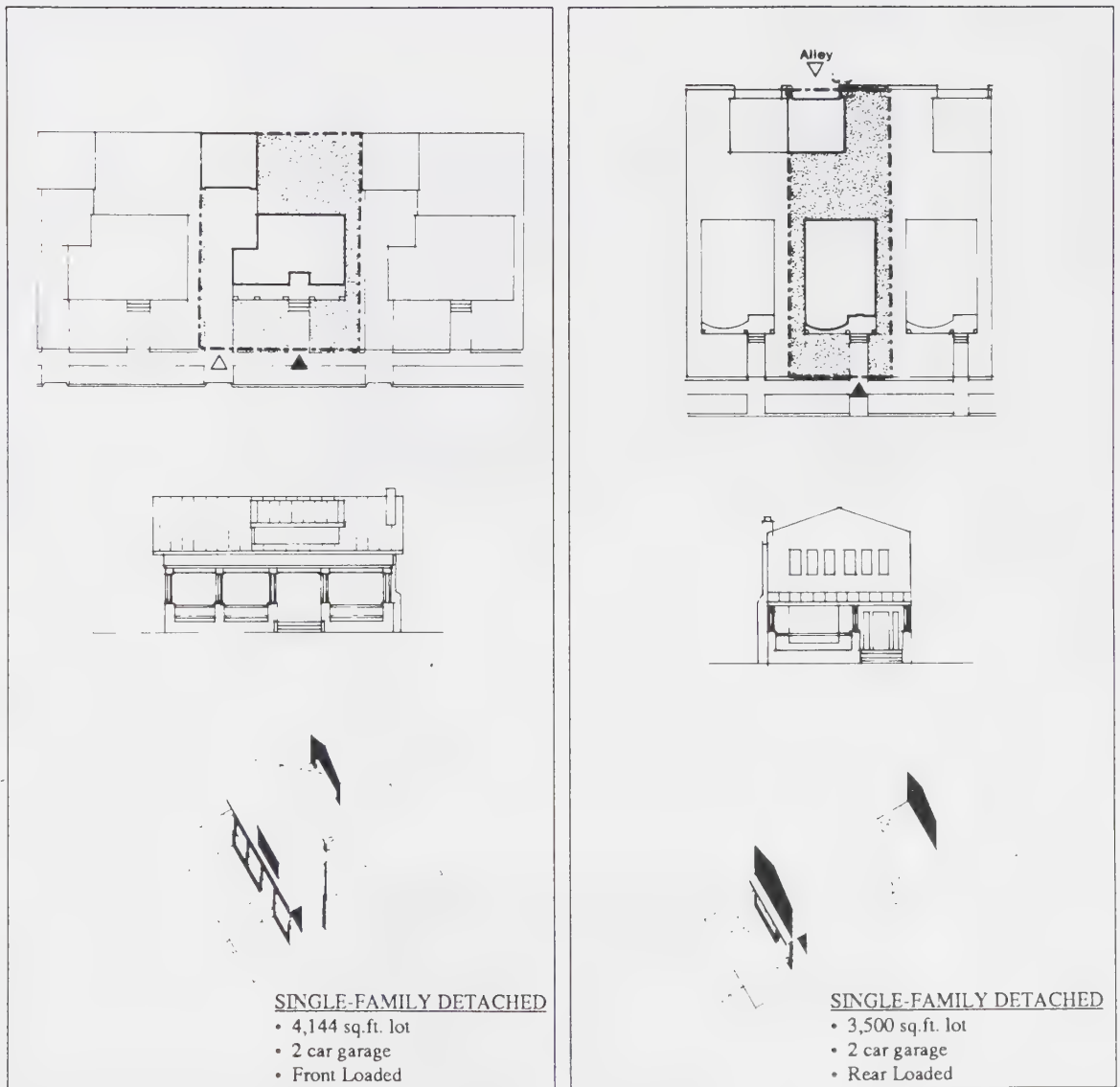
Landscaping is one of the most visible elements of residential neighborhoods, adding to their amenity and perceived value. While trees and understory vegetation would vary depending upon the site and soil conditions, planting programs should be encouraged.

- CD-G-57 Encourage the design of buildings that are oriented to the pedestrian and create positive transitions to the street.

Porches, stoops, windows facing the street, landscaping, and slight grade transitions within the yard space help to create positive transitions between indoor and outdoor, public and private spaces. Garages should not dominate the street space, nor the front elevation of residential buildings.

## CD-G-58 Establish high standards for small-lot design.

Residential lots of 5,000 square feet or less have become increasingly commonplace in California, in part as a result of higher land costs and the need to create more affordable housing. However, in general, smaller lots have a greater need to address design issues, especially related to garage location and treatment and the provision of open space.



*Note: Illustrative only - this serves as an example, not a requirement.*

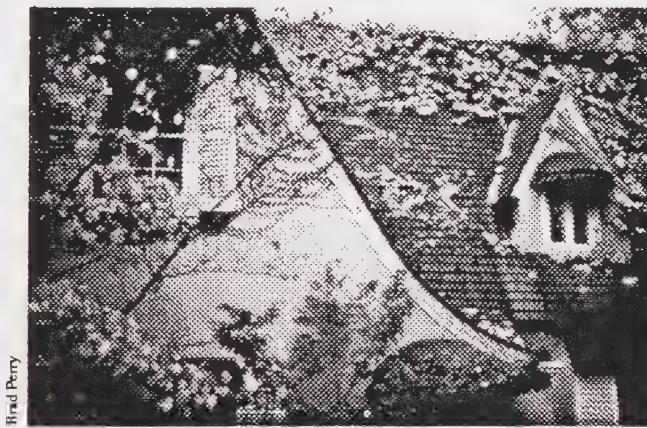
**Figure 2-29: Residential Design Prototypes**

CD-G-59 Encourage creativity and high quality in the design of residential buildings.

To be successful, neighborhoods need to be designed to age gracefully. Durable building materials and high standards of construction should be incorporated, not only for longevity, but also to reduce the overall maintenance costs for residents.

CD-G-60 Encourage the use of distinctive architectural features.

Windows, doors, chimneys, and other such elements provide articulation to building facades and reveal internal organization.



*Distinctive architectural features.*

CD-G-61 Discourage the repetitive feel of new development while providing for design continuity.

Diversity in the color, massing and scale of residential buildings is desirable to avoid the feeling of a monotonous tract development. At the same time, some level of continuity is needed to better define the public realm related to landscape treatment, building orientation, front yard spaces, and the use of fences and articulated entries.



*Street trees, separate sidewalks, front yard setbacks and recessed garage all contribute to the attractive environment created here.*



- CD-G-62      Encourage some diversity in parcel and house sizes, but with careful transitions between densities.
- Where parcels change dramatically in size, special care should be taken to provide for privacy and to maintain some visual continuity along the street.
- CD-G-63      Ensure that higher density residential development is designed with a street and pedestrian orientation.
- Multiple-family dwellings should be oriented to the street and linked to surrounding neighborhoods, with usable and meaningful open spaces for residents.
- CD-G-64      Design for greater resident surveillance and visibility of public and semi-public places.
- This can be achieved by placing windows so that they view onto yards, corridors, entrances, streets, and other public and semi-public places; providing for landscaping that does not obscure visibility to public areas; providing for well-lighted streets, entrances and house numbers and, in multi-family development, lighted and windowed stairwells where possible. Porches, stoops, and other elements that provide a place to comfortably linger will also help to provide “eyes on the street,” helping to maintain a sense of security within neighborhoods.

### **Implementing Policies: New Residential Neighborhoods**

- CD-I-25      Comprehensively revise development standards for streets, parcels and buildings.
- The City’s development standards need to be revised and updated in keeping with the policies above, more specifically related to the hierarchy of streets, street widths, sidewalk placement, landscape continuity, front yard treatments, and curb cuts and driveways.

### **MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD CORES**

Neighborhoods should be developed around a central place that is publicly oriented and conducive to social gathering and meeting. The cores are conceived of as mixed-use centers that provide service and amenity at the neighborhood and district level, and may consist of community facilities such as parks and schools, higher density residential development, or small-scale retail uses. Within these areas, emphasis should be placed on achieving a fine-grain mix of uses, incorporating open space and recreational facilities for amenity, and creating appropriate transitions between uses and densities.

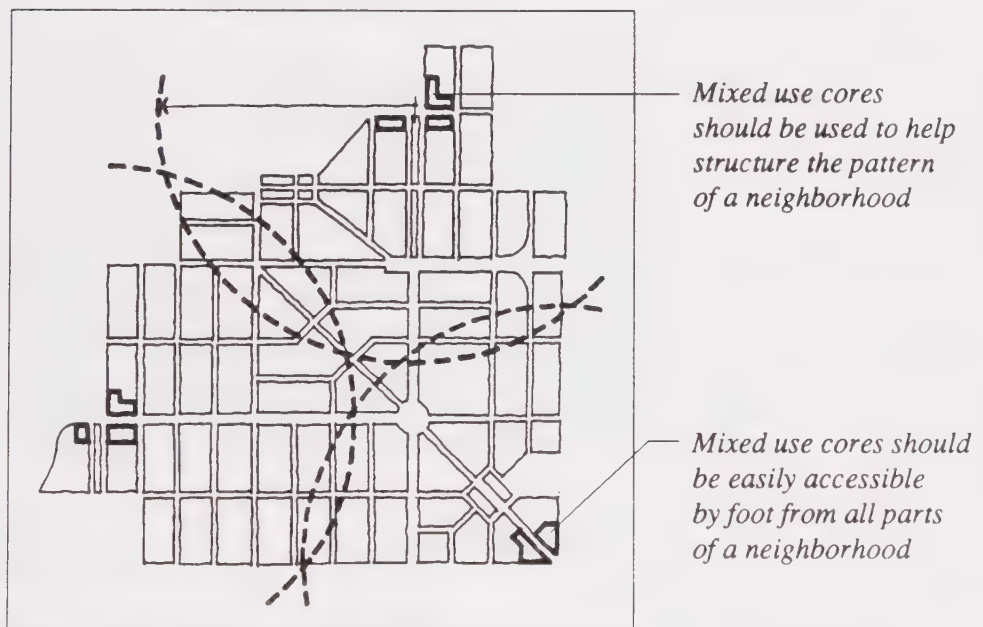


## Guiding Policies: Mixed-Use Neighborhood Cores

CD-G-65

Locate mixed-use neighborhood cores centrally within neighborhoods and closely tied to the framework of other parks and community facilities that structure the neighborhoods.

The location of these neighborhood centers is important so that they can serve all parts of the neighborhood within an easy walking distance and reinforce pedestrian and bicycle routes (see Figure 2-30).



**Figure 2-30: Mixed Use Cores**

CD-G-66

Focus the neighborhood cores around neighborhood parks and open spaces.

The neighborhood core uses should be designed so that they are organized around publicly-oriented uses and open spaces, to increase their accessibility and sense of focus.

- CD-G-67      Provide for the development of publicly oriented activities within the mixed-use neighborhood cores to establish these places as destinations within the neighborhoods.

A variety of public and private uses, as well as such community facilities as child care services, meeting halls, post offices, medical support and recreational facilities, should be encouraged to locate in the mixed-use cores to broaden their role and function and to attract a greater number of people who can use them to shop for daily needs as well as to socialize, recreate, meet and gather.

- CD-G-68      Ensure that the scale and character of development does not overwhelm the surrounding neighborhood.

These neighborhood centers should be designed at a higher density than surroundings and provide for an innovative mix of uses, but with a fine-grained pedestrian scale and positively integrated within the surrounding neighborhood.

- CD-G-69      Encourage the location of parking areas in a manner that does not detract from the pedestrian environment.

Parking areas must be carefully planned and configured within the neighborhood cores so as to balance a vital pedestrian environment with automobile convenience. Parking areas should be:

- Broken up into smaller increments by landscaping and connected to sidewalks through clear pedestrian connections;
- Located away from pedestrian activity areas and focal uses (i.e., parks and open space);
- Sized to take advantage of shared parking opportunities;
- Landscaped to achieve a 50 percent shading at tree maturity; and
- Buffered from adjacent uses through the use of low walls and hedges.

- CD-G-70      Establish build-to lines and require buildings to front on the primary street(s).

This would promote a stronger pedestrian orientation to the street and provide opportunities for more public active uses to happen within sidewalk areas.

- CD-G-71      Encourage the development of seasonal or temporal events which attract a concentration of activities in selected areas of the city.

Produce or specialty markets, neighborhood fairs and seasonal celebration have grown in popularity throughout the country, and they may provide a way of further enlivening the mixed-use neighborhood core. These should be carefully planned to enhance, not take away from, future retail activities in the mixed use cores.

### **Implementing Policies: Mixed-Use Neighborhood Cores**

- CD-I-26      Require the preparation of a master plan for the mixed-use neighborhood cores prior to or in conjunction with consideration of development approvals.

The master plan should undergo special site plan review as well as review by the Architectural Review Board for conformance to the General Plan policies.

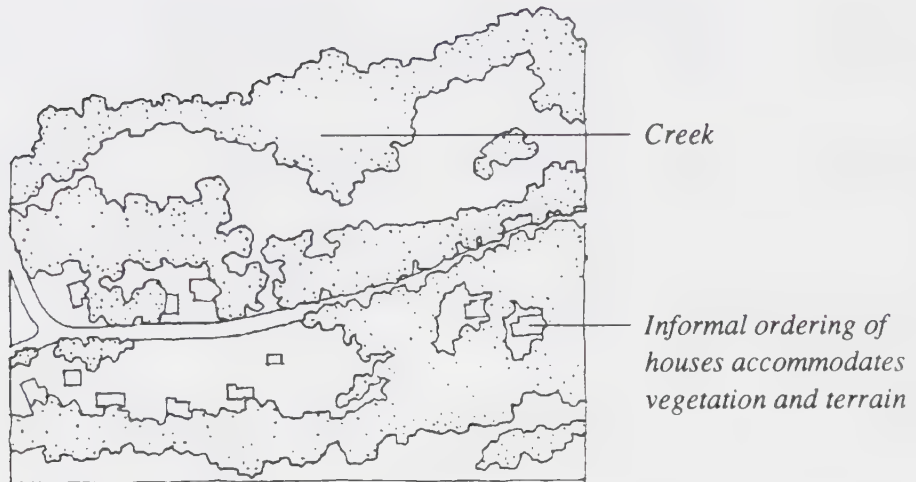
### **FOOTHILL DEVELOPMENT**

The foothills are a scenic amenity within Chico deserving of special consideration in new residential design and development. Since Chico is uniquely located in the Central Valley at the base of the Sierra Nevada foothills and its only view is to the east, this viewshed is a valuable resource to be protected.

### **Guiding Policies: Foothill Development**

- CD-G-72      Blend foothill development with the surrounding landscape and topography, and diminish its visual prominence, from the valley floor.

The height of structures, pattern of development, and use of color and lighting are critical elements which affect the quality of views to the foothills (see Figure 2-31).



**Figure 2-31: Foothill Development**

CD-G-73 In foothill areas, allow for streets that are kept to the minimum dimension necessary for access and parking in order to reduce the need for grading.

Streets may be reduced in size by allowing, as appropriate:

- Minimum paved dimension of the street
- One-sided sidewalks
- Alternative approaches to landscaping
- Clustered parking areas

CD-G-74 Encourage the careful location of new roads buildings and other development to provide maximum view corridors, to the extent other objectives, such as solar orientation and circulation patterns, are not diminished.

While cul-de-sacs may be allowed in these areas, long “shotgun” alignments that are highly visible from lower elevations should be avoided.

CD-G-75 Discourage the development of highly visible or intrusive structures.

This will involve developing design standards for height, color, shape and massing of structures, stepped forms, landscaping and lighting.



- CD-G-76      Limit the extent and amount of grading in foothill areas, and where grading occurs, emulate the contours of the natural slope.

The foothills are a sensitive environment, ecologically as well as visually, and in order to minimize impacts within these areas, grading should be kept to the minimum necessary in visible areas.

- CD-G-77      Consider view corridors and vistas in the design of parks and creekside greenways.

Parks and open spaces, such as creekside greenways, can be used to extend the sense of the open landscape and to create view corridors to the surrounding foothills.

### **Implementing Policies: Foothill Development**

- CD-I-27      Establish special design and development standards for building within the foothills.

This will involve preparation of design guidelines for color, height, shape and massing of structures, stepped forms, landscaping and lighting. Design guidelines and development standards should reflect the unique qualities of the foothill environment—its soils, topography, landscape and hydrology.

- CD-I-28      With incentives, encourage more clustered housing/open space projects for the east side.

Clustered development, if well sited, can result in a greater openness and visibility to the surrounding terrain and make the landscape more visible within the city.

- CD-I-29      Require visual simulations of proposed development.

In visible foothill areas or above an identified elevation (such as 300 feet or 250 feet in the Northeast), visual simulations (prepared by hand or computer) of proposed development should be prepared prior to development approvals. Visual simulations should be prepared in a setting which is neutral and objective to the setting and its context.

- CD-I-30      Explore the feasibility of designating viewshed corridors and viewshed protection standards to protect views of the foothills from the valley floor.

## 2.7 LANDMARKS AND PUBLIC ART

Landmarks and public art are important elements that can be used to provide focus and structure within the city and, at the same time, give greater meaning to the urban experience. The following policies place emphasis on utilizing landmarks and public art to heighten the sense of the city, its visible structure and cultural legacy:

### **Guiding Policies: Landmarks And Public Art**

**CD-G-78** Encourage the preservation of identified buildings and landscapes of historic significance.

Chico has a distinguished urban tradition and a strong cultural identity. Its historic and cultural resources are among its most attractive urban features and deserve protection and enhancement.

**CD-G-79** Identify locations for new landmarks at key places within the city fabric, such as city entrances, along open space corridors, where street grids meet, or within the park system.

Landmarks should be located within public spaces and associated with community uses (including places of worship), and designed as focal points in the structure of the city.

**CD-G-80** Encourage the development of cultural and arts facilities in the downtown to reinforce the role of the downtown in the city and region.

There are a number of historic buildings that are presently underutilized within the city, and these should be identified for potential reuse as cultural arts and theatrical facilities.



*Distinctive buildings characterize the downtown.*

CD-G-81 Encourage the development of cultural and art facilities within neighborhoods.

The role of the mixed-use neighborhood cores can be broadened and made more meaningful through the careful siting and design of cultural and arts as well as community facilities.

CD-G-82 Identify key places for a broad range of public art.

Public art should generally be placed in areas that are public in nature and where consideration is given to their proper viewing and experience. Such places may include public parks, creekside greenways, schools and educational facilities, the City Hall, and civic or community facilities.



Brad Perry

*Art at Chico State University*

## **Implementing Policies: Landmarks And Public Art**

CD-I-31 Enhance cultural opportunities through implementation of the City's Fine Arts Master Plan.

The Fine Arts Master Plan, adopted by City Council in July 1993, identifies the opportunities for cultural enhancement.

CD-I-32 Explore ways of providing financial assistance, whenever feasible, to groups or individuals who provide public arts programming and development to the community.

Potential funding and financing sources need to be identified to support public arts installations and programming within Chico.

CD-I-33 Support the establishment of a nonprofit entity to assist the City and the Fine Arts Commission in securing funding and support for arts within the community.

This can involve seeking University, business, and other community cooperation in programming, financing, and other support of artistic and cultural events and opportunities. It can also involve obtaining grants and other sources of state, federal and nonprofit funding.

CD-I-34 Explore ways to develop and expand municipal arts facilities to assist in meeting the needs of organizations that provide arts services through the use of such facilities.

This could include development of a fine arts complex, municipal performing arts center, or an outdoor amphitheater in Bidwell Park in cooperation with the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission. A study to identify cultural needs, opportunities and implementation approaches should be undertaken.

CD-I-35 Expand the City's role in providing works of art in public places.

This could be achieved by:

- Seeking funding for City programs for the installation and maintenance of works of art in public places; and
- Encouraging private businesses, through development incentives and other nonmonetary incentives, to exhibit and install works of art in public areas and to make these areas available for visual and performing arts programs.



CD-I-36      Facilitate access to public and private spaces that are compatible with the exhibition of art works and the performance of artistic programs.

This will require initiatives to foster private and public funding of art exhibits and performances and encourage exhibition and performance partnerships between artists and all sectors of the community.

CD-I-37      Explore ways of promoting media exposure and public information regarding artistic achievement, fine arts performances and exhibitions, including the use of public access television facilities for this purpose.

In its budget, the City should consider establishing a fund for the dissemination of information on arts and cultural activities taking place within Chico.

CD-I-38      Promote the installation of visual art and art treatments in and on City-owned buildings, facilities and open spaces.

The City should continue to show its commitment to the arts by sponsoring them within its own buildings and facilities.

CD-I-39      Promote ethnically and culturally diverse programs, both in education and exhibitions.

The cultural diversity and richness of the community should be expressed in all areas, including cultural arts programming. To the extent possible, the City should support diversity in the arts.

CD-I-40      Identify funding sources and develop financial incentives for the structural rehabilitation and reuse of key buildings of historic or architectural significance.

The City should identify key buildings that are in need of structural repair; develop cost estimates for rehabilitation; and develop a funding strategy that implements their rehabilitation.

## PART II

# LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT











### **3 LAND USE ELEMENT**

The text and policies of the Land Use Element and the General Plan Diagram (folded in the back of this volume) constitute the physical framework for the General Plan. The Diagram designates the proposed general location, distribution, and extent of land uses. For some areas, further detail will be provided by specific plans (see Section 3.11). As required by state law, land use classifications, shown as letter designations, labels or graphic patterns on the Diagram, specify a range for population density and building intensity for each type of designated land use. These standards of population density and building intensity allow circulation and public facility needs to be determined; they also reflect the environmental carrying-capacity limitations established by other elements of the General Plan.

#### **3.1 GROWTH AND PHYSICAL EXPANSION**

Figure 3-1 shows the Planning Area boundary, current (1994) City limit and the Sphere of Influence, urban expansion areas proposed in the General Plan, and an Urban Development Area Boundary. Figure 3-2 shows the quadrants used to aggregate development information in the tables.

##### **BUILDOUT POPULATION**

The Planning Area, at buildout, would accommodate a population of approximately 134,000, an increase of 66 percent over the estimated 1992 population of 80,580<sup>1</sup>. Table 3.1-1 shows the current and projected populations for the Planning Area and the County. The time at which full development ("buildout") will occur is not specified in or anticipated by the Plan, but is expected to take place over a 15- to 25-year period.

Development consistent with the General Plan resulting from application of assumed average densities and intensities (see Section 3.2) for the different land use classifications to vacant and underutilized sites is described in Tables 3.1-2 (land area) and 3.1-3 (housing units and building floor area). Detailed comparison of existing and incremental housing units and commercial and industrial land is made in Sections 3.3 and 3.5.

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<sup>1</sup>

Allowing for a land vacancy rate of 15 percent, the buildout population would be about 128,100, or an increase of 59 percent over the current (1992) population.

# Planning Area

Figure 3-1



- City Limits
- Urban Expansion Areas
- Current (1994) Sphere of Influence

Source: City of Chico



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

City of Chico  
GENERAL PLAN

November 1994





**TABLE 3.1-1  
POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS**

	1980	1992		1980- 1992	BUILDOUT	
	Population	Population <sup>a</sup>	Share of County	Annual Growth Rate	Population	Share of County
Planning Area	57,370	80,580	42.1 %	2.9 %	134,000	48.0 %
Butte County	143,850	191,200	100.0 %	2.5 %	277,400	100.0 %

<sup>a</sup>Estimated by Urban Decision Systems from U.S. Census data.

<sup>b</sup>Assuming Plan buildout in the year 2012.

Sources: U.S. Census, 1980; California Department of Finance, 1993; and Blayney Dyett, 1994.



*Chico's eastside is characterized by area containing Vernal Pool habitat (foreground) rising into Oak covered foothills. Historic stone walls are often found framing these picturesque landscape.*



Planning Area  
Quadrants

Figure 3-2



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

City of Chico  
GENERAL PLAN

November 1994





**Table 3.1–2****PLAN AREA BY LAND USE CLASSIFICATION FOR ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Acres)**

(excluding land area for projects that have vested development approvals)

	NORTHEAST			NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST		SOUTHEAST	TOTAL
	CSA 87	Airport	Other	Bell–Muir	Other	Diamond Match	Other		
Rural Residential				240				80	320
Very Low Density Residential	970		30		40		10	370	1,420
Low Density	170	210	230		320	50	30	520	1,530
Medium Density	80		50		190	20		40	380
Medium–High Density	10		90		30	20		140	290
High Density					10	10	10	20	50
Total Residential	1,230	210	400	240	590	100	50	1,170	3,990
Community Commercial		20	10		20	10	10	230	300
Mixed–Use Neighborhood Core	30		10	10	10			20	80
Visitor Commercial									
Commercial Services			50		20			30	100
Total Commercial	30	20	70	10	50	10	10	280	480
Offices	30		90	20	20	10		70	240
Manufacturing and Warehousing		130	170		300		810	100	1,510
Industrial Park	40	270				10		30	350
Total Industrial	40	400	170		300	10	810	130	1,860
Public	10		20	40	10			30	110
Neighborhood and Community Parks	3	7	33	3	13	3	30	37	130
TOTAL ALL USES	1,343	637	783	313	983	133	900	1,717	6,810

**Notes:**

a CSA 87 numbers are for the area to Rock Creek.

b Bell Muir numbers are for land outside the Urban Development Area to Mud Creek, as depicted on the General Plan Diagram.

c Additions to Bidwell Park, and Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety areas are not included in the calculations.

d Areas are rounded to the tenth place except for parks, where they are rounded to the nearest acre.

e Diamond Match numbers presented here are used for traffic modelling purposes only. For specific policies related to Diamond Match, see Section 3.11.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994

**Table 3.1–3**

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE GENERAL PLAN**

(including projects that have vested development approvals)

	NORTHEAST			NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST		SOUTHEAST	TOTAL	ASSUMED AVERAGE FAR
	CSA 87	Airport	Other	Bell–Muir	Other	Diamond Match	Other			
<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>										
Rural Residential				20				10	30	
Very Low Density Residential	780		20		30		10	840	1,680	
Low Density	780	650	2,480		1,870	220	150	4,150	10,300	
Medium Density	760		530		1,870	160		410	3,730	
Medium–High Density	120		1,620		580	270		2,460	5,050	
High Density					300	300	210	540	1,350	
Total Residential	2,440	650	4,650	20	4,650	950	370	8,410	22,140	
<b>COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SPACE ('000 s.f.)</b>										
Community Commercial		150	70		210	60	60	1,700	2,250	0.25
Mixed–Use Neighborhood Core	370		160	180	130		50	290	1,180	0.30
Visitor Commercial										0.25
Commercial Services			440		230			290	960	0.25
Total Commercial	370	150	670	180	570	60	110	2,280	4,390	
Offices	410		1,170	260	260	140		860	3,100	0.35
Manufacturing and Warehousing		710	920		1,670		4,520	560	8,380	0.15
Industrial Park	330	2,500				110		310	3,250	0.25
Total Industrial	330	3,210	920		1,670	110	4,520	870	11,630	

**Notes:**

a CSA 87 numbers are for the area to Rock Creek west of Hicks Lane.

b Bell Muir numbers are for land outside the Urban Development Area to Mud Creek, as depicted on the General Plan Diagram

c Totals may not add due to independent rounding.

d Housing unit calculations are based on average density assumed for each land–use classification; see Section 3.2.

e Land vacancy rate assumptions for additional commercial and industrial development are: Commercial Service, 10%; Mixed–use Neighborhood Core: 0%; all other uses, 15%.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994

### LAND NEEDED FOR FUTURE JOBS

The General Plan Diagram is designed to ensure a balanced land use pattern, so land designated for additional commercial and industrial development matches the need for jobs associated with the population increase that would occur with residential development envisioned by the Plan. Table 3.1-4 shows the estimated increase in workforce in the Planning Area expected to be employed in each major sector, the building space, land needed to accommodate this workforce, and land provided for additional development in the General Plan for the buildout population. As can be seen, land provided for commercial and office uses in the Plan closely corresponds to the projected need. Because site area, configuration, access and other requirements for different types of industries vary dramatically, the General Plan provides a prudent amount of industrial sites in a variety of settings and locations. Many of these industrial sites also are subject to environmental constraints, so the actual developable land may be less than 1,840 acres provided by the Plan.

**TABLE 3.1-4  
URBAN LAND NEEDS AND DEVELOPABLE LAND UNDER GENERAL PLAN**

	Increase in Workforce with General Plan Buildout	Building Space Needed to Accommodate Workforce (Millions of sq. ft.)	Land Needed to Accommodate Workforce (Gross acres)	Developable Land Provided in General Plan (Acres)
Office and Medical	9,033	2.5 (@275 s.f./worker)	192 (@ 0.35 average FAR)	240 <sup>a</sup>
Commercial and Services	6,420	3.2 (@500 s.f./worker)	347 (@0.25)	460
Industrial (includes Industrial Park)	4,204	2.9 (@700 s.f./worker)	530 (@0.15)	1,840
Agircultural and Education	2,045	<sup>b</sup>	—	—
Construction, Mining, and others	1,063	n.a.	—	—
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,725</b>			

<sup>a</sup> Not including downtown and proposed mixed-use cores. Additional development would also be provided in business settings in the Industrial Park category.

<sup>b</sup> Employment provided at schools and other educational facilities.

Land need assumes net to gross ratio of 0.85.

Source: Blayne Dyett, 1994.

## GROWTH AND EXPANSION

A bird's eye view of the City drawn in 1871, 11 years after the City's founding by John Bidwell, shows Chico as a gridded 290-acre town (about 0.45 square miles) — less than 15 minutes across on foot for most pedestrians — within the area bounded by the Little and Big Chico creeks, and the Southern Pacific Railroad and Flume Street.

Downtown developed over time as a mixed-use center, containing a variety of uses, services, and building types. The South Campus Historic District, constructed between 1862 and 1930, illustrates the range of uses found in proximity to one another in neighborhoods developed in the years following Chico's inception. Since then, the City has expanded incrementally, initially close to the Main Street/Broadway Area, but later to the north, east, and south. Development to the west of the railroad includes residential uses, industrial buildings, and scattered service commercial uses close to downtown, and single-family subdivisions along West Sacramento Avenue.

The City today occupies an area of about 22 square miles (including parks, airport, and vacant land) in a Planning Area of approximately 150 square miles. While overall the form of the City is fairly compact, some of the newly developing areas are more than four miles away from downtown. Although large tracts of land are devoted to exclusive uses, shopping, and access to services, creeks and parks are still a walk away for most residents. It is the General Plan's goal to make access to creeks and many parks feasible for the great majority of the population.

Governing principles that provide a basis for policies relating to land use and growth that follow, in this and in later sections, are listed below. They complement and support policies relating to urban form and character included in Chapter 2: Community Design.

- ▶ **Agriculture and Hillside Preservation.** The General Plan Diagram is designed to ensure that urban encroachment beyond the current Greenline<sup>2</sup> does not occur except in the Bell-Muir study area, and that the hillsides and sensitive resources are protected from development. Detailed policies relating to these are in Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation.

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<sup>2</sup>

The Greenline was adopted jointly by the City and the County in 1982. Measures adopted to ensure maintenance of the Greenline include consistency of City and County Zoning and joint City/County referral and comments on land use applications.



- ▶ **Compact Form.** The General Plan Diagram seeks to ensure that new development would be contiguous to the existing urban areas and would add to the physical and perceptual compactness of Chico's urban form. The provision of a balanced land-use program obviates the need for urban expansion at remote sites beyond the depicted boundary for urban uses.
- ▶ **Promotion of Infill Development.** In order to minimize pressure on conversion of agricultural land, encroachment into the foothills, and efficient provision of services, the Plan encourages use and revitalization of vacant and underutilized sites. These include reuse of the Diamond Match site, promotion of live/work spaces in areas such as Park Avenue and carefully studied designation of complementary and viable uses on vacant sites in existing neighborhoods.
- ▶ **Transit-supportive Development Intensities.** New residential development that would result from implementation of the General Plan would be at an overall urban density of about 7.8 units per gross acre<sup>3</sup>. This would be achieved by an emphasis on smaller-lot single family residences, attached housing, and two- to three-story walk-up apartments; the High-Density Residential designation is reserved for select locations such as downtown and the new neighborhood centers.
- ▶ **Neighborhoods, not Subdivisions.** The General Plan embodies the community's desire to plan "neighborhoods not subdivisions" by providing a full range of uses and activities needed on a frequent basis within the neighborhoods. Where feasible, the General Plan designates neighborhood commercial and recreational uses in neighborhoods that presently lack these activities. To foster neighborhood identity, uses and intensities are designated at the pedestrian and bicycle, rather than at the automobile scale.
- ▶ **Flexibility and Mixed-use.** To provide flexibility and encourage mixed-use development, the use and intensity regulations provide incentives for certain uses and mixes in locations such as downtown and the neighborhood centers.

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<sup>3</sup>

Not including land designated for Rural and Very Low Density Residential. This figure also does not include second-units and units that could be built with density bonuses for affordability required by state law.

### **Guiding Policies: Growth and Physical Expansion**

- LU-G-1 Promote orderly and balanced growth by working with the County and the LAFCO to establish long-term growth boundaries for the Planning Area consistent with Plan objectives.
- LU-G-2 Promote infill development.
- LU-G-3 Ensure that new development is at an intensity to ensure a long-term compact urban form.
- LU-G-4 Maintain long-term boundaries between urban and agricultural uses in the west, and urban uses and the hillside in the east, and limit expansion north and south to maintain compact urban form. The hillside is generally defined as the area where oak woodland habitat begins, approximately the 300-foot contour in all areas, except in the Northeast where it is defined by the 250-foot contour (see Figure 7-1 in the Open Space and Environmental Conservation Element). Multiple approaches to restrict urbanization outside the City's sphere of influence will be used, including large-lot-zoning and possibly acquisition of land for a greenbelt.
- LU-G-5 Ensure consistency between the General Plan and implementing ordinances and regulations.

### **Implementing Policies: Growth and Physical Expansion**

- LU-I-1 Establish zoning districts and development standards in the Zoning Ordinance consistent with the General Plan, and amend the Zoning Map to be consistent with the General Plan Diagram.
- LU-I-2 To achieve a long-range compact form, work with the County and the LAFCO as appropriate to ensure that:
- Development that is not contiguous with the planned urban area is only approved if it is very low density rural residential development, with a minimum average density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres or more, and agricultural-related commercial or industrial development; and

- Joint City/County referral and comments on development applications are extended to include all unincorporated portions of the Planning Area.
- The City, in concert with the County, will investigate and implement mechanisms to find and establish an open space belt around the urban area, where needed.
- The County's General Plan is consistent with City's General Plan at the time the County's General Plan is prepared and adopted.

LU-I-3 As part of the Annual General Plan Report, monitor and report on:

- Cumulative residential development since Plan adoption;
- The overall density of residential projects approved during the previous year. (Approvals in the unincorporated areas should be included as part of the Annual Report.); and
- Supply of vacant land by use.

LU-I-4 As part of the project approval process, strive to ensure that new residential development in the Planning Area maintain an average overall density of seven units per gross acre (excluding Rural and Very Low Density Residential development).

The Annual Report will establish the need for any steps, including those that may be required jointly with the County, that may be needed to ensure that the density target is maintained.

*See also Section 3.3: Residential Development.*

LU-I-5 Work with Butte County to:

- Develop an appropriate plan for the Bell-Muir area;
- Reinforce the Greenline and greenbelt policies; and
- Secure joint County adoption of the General Plan and recognition of the eastern boundary of urban uses on the General Plan Diagram as the long-term Urban Development Boundary between rural and urban uses.

- Explore the feasibility of establishing an area-wide planning commission to facilitate coordination of land use policy in the Planning Area and eventual unification of the urban area.

## **3.2 LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS**

This section of the Land Use Element describes the land use classifications designated on the General Plan Diagram. The legend of the General Plan Diagram abbreviates the land use classifications described below. The General Plan Diagram is a diagrammatic representation of policies contained in the General Plan. It is to be used and interpreted in conjunction with the text and other figures contained in the General Plan.

Uses on sites less than two acres in size are generally not depicted on the Diagram. Where existing uses on such sites are compatible with the depicted use (such as an existing single-family home in an area designated for High Density Residential use), such uses will continue to be recognized as conforming through the Zoning Ordinance. Existing uses that are not compatible with the designated use (such as industrial uses in an area designated for residential use), will become non-conforming upon revision of the Zoning Ordinance. The interpretation of consistency with the General Plan on sites less than two acres in size will be done through the Zoning Ordinance update process.

The classifications in this section represent adopted City policy. They are meant to be broad enough to give the City flexibility in implementing City policy, but clear enough to provide sufficient direction in carrying out the General Plan.

The City's Zoning Ordinance will contain more detailed provisions and standards for land use and maximum population densities and building intensities than are described in the classifications. More than one zoning district may be consistent with a General Plan land use classification.

### **POPULATION DENSITY AND BUILDING INTENSITY**

Under state law, the Land Use Element of the General Plan must establish standards of population density and building intensity for each land use classification. The General Plan expresses residential density as housing units and persons per gross acre, described in the classifications and in Table 3.2-1.

For nonresidential uses, a maximum permitted ratio of gross floor area to site area (FAR) is specified. FAR is a broad measure of building bulk that controls both visual



prominence and traffic generated. It can be clearly translated to a limit on building bulk in the zoning ordinance and is independent of the type of use occupying the building. The zoning



*.5 FAR is equivalent to 1 story covering 50% of its site or 2 stories covering 25 percent of its site.*

ordinance shall provide specific exceptions to the FAR limitations for uses with low employee densities, such as wholesaling and distribution, or low peak-hour traffic generation, such as a hospital. Within the Central Business District (Downtown), the zoning ordinance can provide for transfers of unused FAR within a block, or between blocks when the "donor" of the unused FAR is the owner of a designated historic building or landmark.

The density/intensity standards do not imply that development projects will be approved at the maximum density or intensity specified for each use. Zoning regulations consistent with General Plan policies and/or site conditions may reduce development potential within the stated ranges. Gross density standards and assumed averages for residential categories are listed below.

## RESIDENTIAL

Six residential land use classifications are established to provide for development of a full range of housing types. Densities are stated as a number of housing units per gross acre of developable land, excluding areas subject to physical, environmental, or geological constraints and areas dedicated for creekside greenways or wetlands protection, provided that at least one housing unit may be built on each existing legal parcel designated for residential use.

Second units permitted by local regulation, state-mandated density bonuses for provision of affordable housing, and a 20 percent density bonus for residential developments located within a 1/4-mile of transit corridors are in addition to densities otherwise permitted.

Assumed average densities listed below are used to calculate probable housing unit and population holding capacity. Neither the averages nor the totals constitute General Plan policy. Illustrative Residential prototypes are depicted in Section 3.3.

**Rural Residential.** Up to 0.2 units per gross acre (5-acre minimum parcel size; up to 0.8 persons per gross acre). Clustered development with smaller lots may be permitted if Butte County standards for septic systems are met and the average density does not exceed 0.2 units per gross acre. The average density assumed for General Plan buildout calculations is 0.1 units per gross acre.

**Very Low Density.** From 0.2 to 2 units per gross acre (0.6 to 6.0 persons per gross acre). Typical lots would be at least 20,000 square feet, but clustered development with smaller lots is permitted, provided the average density does not exceed 2 units per gross acre. The average density assumed for buildout calculations is one (1) unit per gross acre.

**Low Density.** From 2.1 to 7 units per gross acre (5.3 to 17.5 persons per gross acre). Typical lots would be 6,000 square feet, but the minimum would be 5,000 square feet, and smaller lots (4,500 square feet or less) may be permitted in neighborhoods meeting specified community design standards, subject to specific review requirements. This classification is mainly intended for detached single-family dwellings, but attached single-family units may be permitted, provided each unit has ground-floor living area and private outdoor open space. The average density assumed for General Plan buildout calculations is 4.5 units per gross acre, except in the Bell Muir Area where an average density of 5.6 units per gross acre is assumed.

**Medium Density.** From 7.1 to 14 units per gross acre (17.0 to 33.6 persons per gross acre) with a minimum of 2,250 square feet of net area (i.e. exclusive of streets, parks and other public rights-of-way) required per unit. Lot sizes typically would range from 5,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet, with the larger lots for projects with 4 units. Dwelling types may include attached or detached single-family housing, duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses. The average density assumed for General Plan calculations is 10 units per gross acre.

**Medium-High Density.** From 14.1 to 22 units per gross acre (31.0 to 48.4 persons per gross acre), with a minimum of 1,425 square feet of net area per unit. Dwelling types may include townhouses, garden apartments, and other forms of multi-family housing. The average density assumed for General Plan buildout calculations is 17 units per gross acre.

**High Density.** From 22.1 to 35 units per gross acre (39.8 to 63 persons per gross acre), with a minimum of 900 square feet of net area required per unit. This designation is intended for areas adjacent to Downtown and for designated transit corridors where higher density may be appropriate. New high density projects should have reduced parking requirements to encourage use of alternative modes of transportation and reduce automobile dependency. A 25

percent density bonus may be approved for projects with affordable housing, housing for elderly residents with specific amenities designed for residents, and housing that meets specified community design standards. The density assumed for General Plan buildout calculations is 30 units per gross acre.

### **DOWNTOWN**

This designation provides for a full range of uses in the Downtown area, including retail stores, eating and drinking establishments, commercial recreation, financial, business and personal services, hotels and motels, educational, and social services, government offices, and housing. The maximum non-residential Floor Area Ratio is 2.0 to 6.0, and residential densities of up to 50 units per gross acre are permitted. Further detail on development intensities and use-mixes in Downtown is provided in Table 3.4-1.

### **COMMERCIAL**

In addition to Downtown commercial uses, five commercial land use designations are established; each of these serves a specific purpose, accommodating either a broad or narrow range of uses.

Commercial classifications that follow:

- ▶ Encourage upper-story residences in the Community Commercial, Mixed-use Neighborhood Core and Office areas, but not in the Commercial Service and Visitor Commercial areas because of potential land use conflicts and incompatibilities;
- ▶ Permit offices in Community Commercial areas, but to ensure an adequate market for designated Community Commercial areas, allow only support retail uses in the Office and Industrial areas;
- ▶ Do not permit offices as a primary use in Commercial Service or Visitor Service areas because permitting offices would increase land values, making it harder for these uses to compete with offices for the same sites.

**Community Commercial.** This designation is intended to provide sites for retail shopping areas, primarily in shopping centers, containing a wide variety of businesses, including: retail stores, eating and drinking establishments, commercial recreation, service stations, automobile sales and repair services, financial, business and personal services, motels, educational and social services. The maximum non-residential Floor Area Ratio is 0.3. Upper-story residential uses are permitted, subject to development standards, up to a maximum of 22 units per



gross acre with higher densities permitted in transit-served corridors. Zoning districts will limit certain commercial areas to neighborhood stores or non-automotive establishments.

**Mixed-Use Neighborhood Core.** This designation accommodates businesses, institutions, and service organizations serving the daily needs of nearby residents. Allowable uses include retail shops, small-scale financial, business and personal services and small-scale restaurants; the maximum non-residential Floor Area Ratio is 1.0. Upper-story residential uses are permitted, subject to appropriate standards and a maximum limit of 22 units per gross acre. Limitations on the size and location of parking, coupled with building orientation and design standards, will ensure that a pedestrian-oriented environment is created.

**Visitor Commercial.** This designation is intended to provide sites for visitor-oriented commercial activities, including hotels and motels, convention and meeting facilities, recreation vehicle parks, campgrounds, service stations, retail shops, restaurants, and related services, subject to appropriate standards to create an attractive landscaped environment. The maximum Floor Area Ratio is 1.0.

**Commercial Service.** This designation is intended to provide sites for commercial business not permitted in other commercial areas because they attract high volumes of vehicle traffic and may have adverse impacts on other uses. The maximum Floor Area Ratio is 0.4. Allowable uses include automobile sales and services, building materials, nurseries, agricultural equipment rentals, contractors' yards, wholesaling, warehousing, storage, and similar uses. Offices not accessory to a permitted use and retail uses are excluded, except small restaurants, and convenience stores are to be allowed as ancillary uses, subject to appropriate standards.

**Office.** This designation is intended to provide sites for administrative, financial, business, professional, medical and public offices and support commercial uses, and residential/office mixed-use development in areas where retail and other community commercial uses are not appropriate. The maximum Floor Area Ratio is 0.5, and the maximum residential density is 22 units per gross acre. The City's current R-P Residential/Professional District allows High Density residential uses as well and is considered consistent with this classification. Development standards and buffering requirements will prevent significant adverse affects on adjacent residential uses.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

**Industrial Park.** This designation is intended to provide areas appropriate for moderate- to low-intensity industrial uses capable of being located next to commercial and residential areas with minimum buffering. Allowable uses include light manufacturing, wholesaling, distribution, and storage, retailing as an accessory use only, and offices in a



landscaped setting. Small restaurants and convenience stores will be permitted as ancillary uses, subject to appropriate standards. No raw materials processing or bulk handling would be allowed. The maximum Floor Area Ratio is 0.35, but increases may be permitted, up to 0.8, for uses such as wholesale, distribution, and storage with low employment intensity.

**Manufacturing and Warehousing.** This designation is intended to provide and protect industrial lands for the full range of manufacturing, agricultural and industrial processing, general service, and distribution uses. Unrelated retail and service commercial uses that could be more appropriately located elsewhere in the City would not be permitted, except for offices, RV parks and camp grounds, subject to appropriate standards. Small restaurants and convenience stores would be allowed as ancillary uses, subject to appropriate standards. The maximum Floor Area Ratio is 0.5, and performance standards in the Zoning Ordinance will minimize potential environmental impacts. Increases in the maximum Floor Area Ratio may be permitted, up to 0.8, for uses with low employment intensities, such as wholesaling, warehousing, and distribution.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

This designation includes sites for schools, governmental offices, airport, and other facilities that have a unique public character and typically require at least two acres of land. Places of religious assembly are not shown on the General Plan Diagram, and governmental facilities that are similar to private offices or industrial facilities or are on sites less than two acres in size are not shown as public. The General Plan Diagram does not have to be amended for new public facilities on sites that are less than two acres located in residential, commercial, or industrial areas.

### **PARKS AND CREEKSIDE GREENWAYS**

Public parks and golf courses are designated separately from creekside greenways. The Eastside Little League Field is also shown as a park on the Plan Diagram.

### **OPEN SPACE**

Two categories of open space are delineated on the General Plan Diagram, in addition to the Parks and Creekside Greenways designation. The City also is committed to maintaining a long-term Urban Development Boundary, shown on the Diagram, and to the possible acquisition of land for a greenbelt; see Policy LU-G-4. Further details on open space policies are provided in Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation Element.

**Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety.** This designation includes sensitive habitats including oak and riparian woodlands, wetlands, creekways, riparian corridors, groundwater recharge areas, power transmission line corridors, areas providing range for Eastern

Tehama Deer herds and other hillside areas, viewshed management areas, and areas subject to flooding which are not areas for agriculture. Areas with sensitive biotic habitats included in this classification are further classified as Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs) or Resource Management Areas (RMAs); see Section 7.2: Biological Resources and Habitat Conservation. Development in these areas would be subject to habitat protection standards. For RMAs, Resource Management Plans would be required as a condition of development approval. Residential development is generally permitted at a density not to exceed one housing unit per 40 acres in areas designated as Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety; however, no development is allowed on sites designated as RCAs.<sup>4</sup>

**Open Space for Agriculture and Resource Management.** This designation includes orchards and cropland, grasslands, and very low density rural residential areas, not to exceed one housing unit per 20 or 40 acres, provided that one housing unit may be built on each existing parcel. Agriculture is permitted with fewer restrictions on keeping animals than in the residential classifications. Agricultural processing facilities also are allowed, subject to performance and access standards intended to minimize potential adverse environmental effects and ensure compatibility with adjacent uses. This classification will also accommodate any greenbelts and/or urban buffer areas that may be designated in the future.

Table 3.2-1 summarizes the population density and intensity standards for each land use designation described in the Land Use Element and shown on the General Plan Diagram.

### 3.3 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Preservation and enhancement of Chico's neighborhoods is one of the fundamental concerns of this Plan. General Plan Task Force members participating in the update process posed the issue in straightforward terms: "The City should approve neighborhoods, not subdivisions". Looking ahead, many residents want a community where neighborhood services and facilities are within easy walking or biking distance of their homes, streets are safe for children, and parks and playgrounds are nearby.

The physical character of residential areas is addressed in the Community Design Element; this section of the General Plan focuses on residential land use and the process of building neighborhoods.

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<sup>4</sup>

Sites will be designated as RCAs in the General Plan only after they have been brought into public ownership or the owner has agreed to a permanent restriction for resource conservation as a condition of development approval. Transfer of density from such RCAs to adjacent development land may be permitted.

**TABLE 3.2-1**  
**STANDARDS FOR DENSITY AND DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY**

Land Use Designation	Residential Density (units/gross acre)	Maximum Permitted Non-residential Floor- Area Ratio — FAR	Residential Population		
			Persons/ Housing Unit <sup>a</sup>	Persons/Acre (average)	
Residential					
Rural	0-0.2	—	4.0	0.4	
Very Low Density	0.2-2.0	—	3.0	2.4	
Low Density	2.1-7.0	—	2.5	11.3	
Medium Density	7.1-14.0	—	2.4	24.0	
Medium-High Density	14.1-22.0	—	2.2	37.4	
High Density	22.1-35.0	—	1.8	54.0	
Downtown	See Table 3.4-1 for densities and intensities in Downtown sub-areas				
Commercial					
Community Commercial <sup>b</sup>	up to 22.0	0.3	1.8	<sup>c</sup>	
Mixed-Use Neighborhood Core <sup>b</sup> (see also Table 3.3-3 for permitted densities/ intensities)	14.1-22.0	1.0	1.8	<sup>c</sup>	
Visitor Commercial	—	1.0	n.a.	n.a.	
Commercial Service	—	0.4	n.a.	n.a.	
Office <sup>b</sup>	up to 22.0	0.5	1.8	<sup>c</sup>	
Industrial					
Industrial Park	—	0.35 <sup>d</sup>	n.a.	n.a.	
Manufacturing and Warehousing	—	0.5 <sup>d</sup>	n.a.	n.a.	

<sup>a</sup> The weighted average of these assumptions equals 2.41 persons per housing unit, the same ratio as in the 1990 Census for the Planning Area.

<sup>b</sup> Combined maximum non-residential FAR and residential density may not be achievable because of development standards and requirements.

<sup>c</sup> Depends on the density of housing provided.

<sup>d</sup> Up to 0.8 allowed for low employment intensities (e.g., warehousing, wholesaling or distribution).

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

## RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

Based on information collected as part of a 1993 land use survey conducted by the City and background studies conducted as part of Plan preparation, the overall gross density (that is, including streets and other public rights-of-way) of residential uses in the Planning Area (including Rural and Very Low Density residences) is about 5.0 units per gross acre; the overall gross density excluding these lower density residential uses would be higher. Many of the traditional neighborhoods, such as the Avenues, contain a variety of housing types — single-family and multifamily — within the same block, with overall neighborhood densities that range from 6 to 9 units per gross acre.

In 1993, the density of multifamily development proposals was about 11 units per gross acre, and of single-family projects (excluding Rural and Very Low Density proposals) about 3.8 units per gross acre. Although historically the trend in Chico and other American cities was to lower densities, in recent years the City has seen residential densities increasing. Higher densities are also reflective of the environmental constraints on land currently available for development in the City. (See Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation for details).

The General Plan promotes increased residential densities to provide for more efficient use of available land resources. Guiding principles behind residential development and neighborhood organizing principles depicted on the General Plan Diagram include:

- ▶ **Mix of Housing Types in all Neighborhoods.** The General Plan continues the long-standing City policy of promoting a mix of housing types in all neighborhoods and ensuring that no one area is unduly burdened by higher-density residences.
- ▶ **High-Density Residential Development in Strategic Locations.** The Diagram locates High-Density residences in transit-served corridors, such as along the Esplanade north of Lindo Channel, around Downtown, and in the new mixed-use neighborhood centers. Higher density development is also promoted on vacant and underutilized sites as well as sites likely to undergo long-term redevelopment.
- ▶ **Clustering.** In order to protect valuable natural resources and open space, the Plan encourages clustering in resource-sensitive areas, such as the foothills, and permits it in all residential areas.



- ▶ **Promotion of Small-lot Single-Family Dwellings.** Small-lot developments are encouraged in areas, where practical. These are likely to provide opportunities for many families to participate in the home-ownership market.
- ▶ **Encouragement of Shorter Blocks.** Because Plan densities are specified in gross acres, no loss of development potential would result by providing more frequent through streets and shorter blocks and thus a higher ratio of public street space per acre of urban land.
- ▶ **Minimization of Noise Impacts.** Residential uses are located so that only a small fraction of new residences would be in noise-sensitive areas, such as along the Southern Pacific Railroad and Highway 99.

Table 3.3-1 provides information on the total number of new residential units and expected density of new development in each quadrant of the City that would result from implementation of the General Plan. A detailed breakdown of incremental development for each one of the residential use categories is provided in Table 3.1-3.

### **BUILDING NEIGHBORHOODS**

To foster community identity, the General Plan directs residential expansion in the new growth areas into neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are planned to contain a mix of uses and housing types and to provide convenient access to commercial and service functions used on a frequent basis. Policies in the General Plan strive to promote the integration of new neighborhoods with existing urban development, and to preserve the continuity of the street network.

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**TABLE 3.3-1**  
**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER GENERAL PLAN**

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	ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY QUADRANT				
	Northeast	Northwest	Southwest	Southeast	Total
New Housing Units	7,470	4,640	1,318	8,412	22,110
Average Urban Density*	6.4	7.8	10.1	8.9	7.8
Existing (1992) Housing Units					31,730
Total Housing Units at Buildout					53,840

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\* Excluding Rural and Very Low Density Residential Development.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

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**Neighborhoods and Centers.** A neighborhood focal point would be a well-defined mixed-use center, serving a population of 8,000 to 10,000 residents, organized around publicly-oriented uses and open spaces. On the General Plan Diagram, the centers are represented with a quarter-mile radius — a distance covered by foot in 5 minutes or less by most people. Each center in the new neighborhoods would have an 8- to 12-acre core, which could include a supermarket or a drugstore, a variety of other smaller tenants, such as video stores, bakeries, and restaurants, and other neighborhood serving functions, such as medical, dental, and real-estate offices, as well as community facilities. A neighborhood park would be nearby. Residential uses on upper floors are permitted and even encouraged in the cores. (See Table 3.3-2)

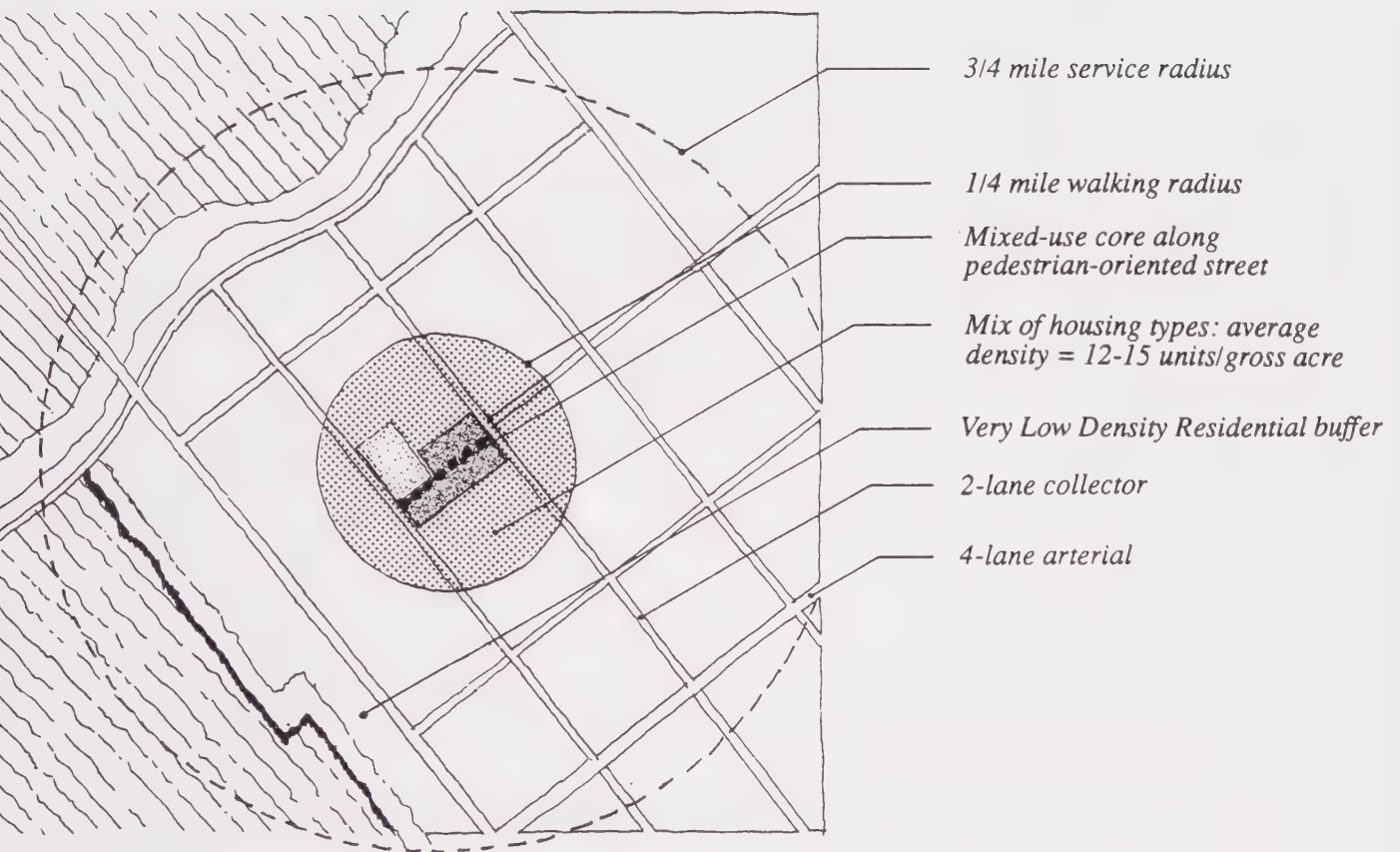
The cores are proposed to be organized along pedestrian-oriented streets. The illustrative plan (Figure 3-3: Neighborhood Organizing Principles) shows a mixed-use core accessible from 2-lane collector streets at either end. Proximity to collector streets would ensure that stores and offices are accessible to those who drive to them and that service trucks can reach the centers without impacting local streets. At the same time, residents would not need to walk across a 4-lane arterial to reach a supermarket.

**TABLE 3.3-2**  
**TYPICAL BUILDOUT OF A 1/4-MILE RADIUS NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER**

	Land Area (acres)	Housing Units
Low Density	28	155
Medium Density	35	350
Medium-High Density	28	335
High Density	10	300
Total Residential	101	1,140
Mixed-Use Neighborhood Core	8-12	
Park	3-5	

**Proximity of Residences to the Centers.** The Plan designates sites for multifamily housing, attached single-family dwellings, townhouses, and apartments in close proximity to each mixed-use commercial core in new neighborhoods to minimize trip-lengths and bring a larger number of residents closer to the center, so they can bike or walk to shops and offices. In new neighborhoods, about 35-40 percent of the housing units would be within a ¼ mile walking distance of a neighborhood core. The centers are intended to contain a variety of housing types at an average overall density of about 12 to 15 units/gross acre.

**Residential Prototypes.** Figure 3-4 illustrates examples of single-family housing types covering the range of General Plan urban residential land use classifications. As the figure shows, given appropriate site configuration and supportive development standards in the Zoning Ordinance, it should be possible to accommodate Plan densities with single-family housing types. However, multi-family housing types would be used at the high end of the High-Density Residential use classification (25 units per gross acre or more). The illustrations show single-family detached and attached residences and townhomes (that is, units are not stacked one above the other), with parking access from the front or the rear via alleys. All prototypes have two covered parking spaces on the lot; in some prototypes additional off-street spaces can be accommodated by parking in tandem. Parking requirements for different housing will be specified in the Zoning Ordinance. All prototypes also have private open space, and individual pedestrian and automobile access. Living areas of residences front the streets and the visual domination of garages is limited. The prototypes depict a range of available choices and are not meant to limit possibilities or creative design solutions, consistent with the Community Design Element. Additional single-family detached prototypes (with a typical density range of up to 7 units per gross acre) are included in Figure 2-35 in the Community Design Element.



# Neighborhood Organizing Principles

Figure 3-3



### **Guiding Policies: Residential Land Use**

- LU-G-6      Preserve the scale and character of established neighborhoods. With growth, there is a need to ensure that the character of established neighborhoods is not lost.
- LU-G-7      Encourage new residential growth in the form of neighborhoods.
- LU-G-8      Provide incentives for development of mixed-use (residential, retail, and office) neighborhood centers, in both the new neighborhoods and in established neighborhoods that lack them. Centers are concentrations of activity and uses that serve a neighborhood function. They are located within close proximity and easy walking distance from adjacent residences and are intended to provide focus and a sense of community for Chico's neighborhoods.
- LU-G-9      Allow and encourage small-lot single-family housing development in new and existing neighborhoods to provide compact development and efficient infill. In addition to the benefit of affordability, small-lot housing increases opportunities to conserve land and protect environmentally sensitive areas and can provide a positive aesthetic quality as characterized by Chico's older neighborhoods.

*See also Goal #6 and Policy 6.4 in the Housing Element.*

- LU-G-10     Improve the community orientation of new residential developments. A community orientation calls for greater attention to the relationship between residences, streets and shared spaces, and does not require sacrifice of privacy or amenities. Gated neighborhoods isolate parts of the community from others and will not be allowed.

*See the Community Design Element for related policies, including CD-G-46, CD-G-49, CD-G-50, CD-G-52 and CD-G-63.*

- LU-G-11     Provide for appropriate relationships between higher density and lower density residential areas, and require buffers of varying size between residential uses and non-residential uses without restricting foot and bicycle access.

*See the Community Design Element for related policies, including CD-I-11, CD-G-17 and CD-G-63.*

- LU-G-12 Encourage and provide incentives for infill development within existing residential areas, at a density not less than surrounding development, subject to appropriate standards to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses.



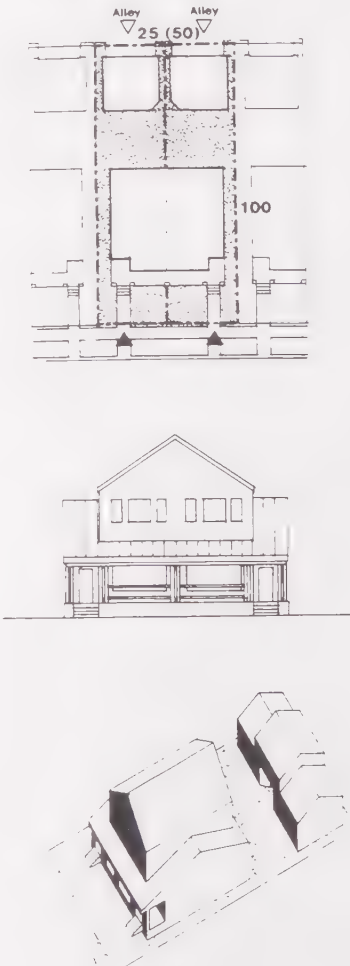


### **Implementing Policies: Residential Land Use**

- LU-I-6 Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance provides for:

- Minimum and maximum densities consistent with the Plan's land use classifications. (In order to promote compact development, and ensure the availability of adequate sites in transit-accessible corridors for high-density housing and development of the proposed neighborhood centers, sites designated for Medium, Medium-High or High-Density Residential uses should be reserved for the intended use.);
- A 4,500 square-foot minimum lot area for small-lot single-family development, either as-of-right in the Single-Family (R-1) zoning district, or in a separate zoning district intended for new growth areas, with an appropriate open space requirement;
- Development standards that permit zero-lot line attached or detached single-family dwellings on sites designated for medium or higher densities in the General Plan; and
- Development standards that do not result in disincentives for providing more frequent local streets. Minimum lot-size standards in the Zoning Ordinance should be attainable in residential projects that provide through streets every 400 to 500 feet.

- LU-I-7 Provide for and encourage a mix of uses, as listed in Table 3.3-3, and illustrated on Figure 3-3, in neighborhood centers. On sites where a part of the site is designated as a Mixed-Use Neighborhood Core, development of neighborhood commercial and office uses will be required as a condition of subdivision approval, unless such development is found infeasible and alternative locations are available and will be developed to carry out these mixed-use policies.

- LU-I-8 Consider adoption of the Chapman-Mulberry Neighborhood Plan, in part or entirety, subsequent to its adoption by Butte County.

Housing Type	DETACHED (front loaded)	DETACHED ZERO-LOT LINE (front loaded)	ATTACHED (rear loaded)	TOWNHOUSE (rear loaded)	TOWNHOUSE (front loaded)
Unit and Lot Configuration					
Lot Size	5,000 sq.ft.	2,100 sq.ft.	2,500 sq.ft.	2,500 sq.ft.	1,500 sq.ft.
Dwelling Size	1,500 sq. ft.	1,200 sq. ft.	1,400 sq. ft.	1,500 sq. ft.	1,200 sq. ft.
Number of Floors	2	2	2	2	2.5
Density (units/gross acre)	6	15	13	14	25
Typical Density Range for Housing Type	up to 7	8-15	8-14	10-20	12-25
General Plan Land Use Classification	Low Density	Medium-Medium High Density	Medium-Medium High Density	Medium-Medium High Density	Medium High-High Density

Illustrative Residential Prototypes

Figure 3-4





### 3.4 DOWNTOWN

The 3- to 5-block wide stretch between the Big and Little Chico creeks referred to as Downtown comprises most of the original township commissioned in 1860 by John Bidwell south of his own mansion. The town grid was laid out along the Shasta-Tehama Road (now Main Street-Esplanade), the stage route through Northern California. The business district was centered on Main Street and Broadway, which to this day remain the main spines of Downtown (though the 8th and 9th street couplet, connecting Highway 99 to Downtown, presently carry a greater traffic volume).

The retail, office, and financial core of the present Downtown is a 12-block area bounded by Salem and Wall, and 1st and 5th streets. Short (250 foot-square) blocks and the roughly squarish shape of the core keep most activities within a walking distance. Chico's Downtown has remained vital, in part, because of the proximity of the CSUC campus. Much of the present retail and other business in Downtown is student-oriented, and eating and drinking establishments comprise a large portion of businesses.

The City Plaza, distinguished by its tall elm trees and adjoining civic buildings, lies at the heart of Downtown, almost equidistant from the Big and Little Chico creeks. South of 5th Street (and the retail core) lie commercial service establishments, motels, and fast food operations. Some sites in this part of Downtown are vacant, and many are underutilized.

Long-term success of Downtown will depend on its ability to nurture existing businesses, attract high employment service uses, and maintain a pleasant environment for pedestrians where one-of-a-kind shops, entertainment facilities, and dining establishments can attract patronage from the entire City and beyond. Because Downtown caters to a different market than that served by the larger malls and discount stores, its future is not imminently threatened by the ever-increasing presence of these establishments in Chico.

To achieve its full potential, the City will need to be actively involved with the business community in shaping a viable strategy that will attract needed investment and limit nuisance uses which detract from the character of Downtown. Design concepts that will enhance the image and role of Downtown are presented in the Community Design Element. A comprehensive parking program, addressing both the need for short-term spaces for shoppers and long-term spaces for employees, also will be needed to ensure Downtown's effective functioning; it should be consistent with efforts to encourage use of alternate modes of transportation.

**TABLE 3.3-3  
INTENSITIES AND MIX OF USES IN NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS**

	Mixed-Use Core	Center Outside Core <sup>a</sup>
<b>Retail</b>	Yes	No
<b>Office</b>	Yes	No
<b>Residential</b>	Yes None on the first floor	Yes
<b>Maximum FAR (Non-residential uses)</b>	1.0	—
<b>Maximum Residential Density</b>	22	Varies <sup>b</sup>
<b>Minimum Residential Density (units/gross acre)</b>	14.1	8

<sup>a</sup> Area within 1/4-mile radius of the Mixed-Use Core.

<sup>b</sup> Maximum densities to be established in the Zoning Ordinance, so that the average is between 12 and 15 units per gross acre.

Note: Combined maximum FAR and residential density may not be achievable because of height, site coverage, parking or other requirements. The intent in providing these maximums is to permit a greater level of flexibility for a mix of uses.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.



*Collier's Hardware at 1st Street and Broadway is a Landmark Business in Chico's Downtown.*

### **Guiding Policies: Downtown**

- LU-G-13 Maintain and enhance Downtown's vitality and economic well-being, and its presence as the City's symbolic center.
- LU-G-14 Encourage development of Downtown as a mixed-use activity center with retail and visitor-oriented uses, business and personal services, government and professional offices, communications facilities, civic uses, and high- density residential uses.
- LU-G-15 Provide incentives for infill development, intensification, and reuse of currently underutilized sites in Downtown.

### **Implementing Policies: Downtown**

- LU-I-9 Prepare and implement a Downtown Action Plan and Implementation Strategy. The Action Plan and Implementation Strategy should include:
- A survey of existing conditions, including amount of space devoted to different uses;
  - Economic and market feasibility analysis, include an analysis of revenue generators in the Downtown area and the feasibility of additional office and high-density residential uses;
  - Development standards and incentives needed to attract new development;
  - Streetscape improvements and provision of bicycle lanes and ideas to enhance Downtown's pedestrian-friendly environment; and
  - A comprehensive parking program.

The Downtown Action Plan and Implementation Strategy also should be consistent with and provide support for implementation proposals in the Community Design Element so efforts to enhance Downtown are mutually supportive. (*See policies CD-G-18 to CD-G-30 and CD-I-15 to CD-I-18.*)

- LU-I-10 Target areas in Downtown (see Figure 3-5: Downtown Sub-areas) for a specific mix of uses as shown in the General Plan Diagram. Allow uses and development intensities in these areas as provided in Table 3.4-1.



- LU-I-11 Amend City codes to conform to Plan policies and standards and to provide for reduced off-street parking requirements for residential uses in the Salem and Wall Street Sub-Areas, where possible.
- LU-I-12 If feasible, continue to extend intersection treatment including bulbing south to 9th Street, and if successful, consider expanding program to include Salem and Wall streets from 1st to 9th streets.
- LU-I-13 Ensure that Downtown remains adequately served by all forms of transportation.

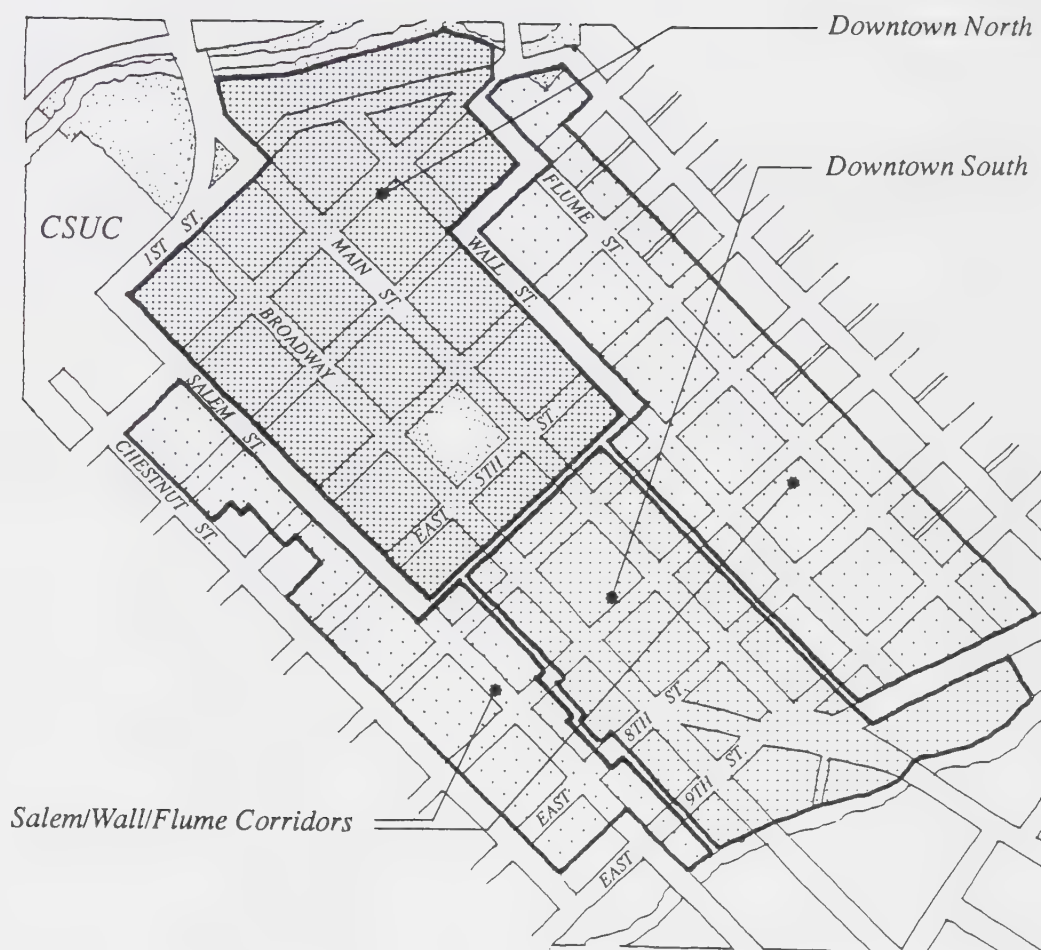
### **3.5 RETAILING AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

Shopping and use of services are activities that provide for social contact as well as business transactions. Since Chico attracts shoppers from a large region, and stores in one part of the City are often frequented by residents from other neighborhoods, retail districts are also critical in shaping the identity and image of the City and the neighborhoods.



*New neighborhood commercial center located at East and Mariposa avenues.*





## Downtown Subareas

Figure 3-5

**TABLE 3.4-1**  
**INTENSITIES AND PERMITTED MIX OF USES IN DOWNTOWN SUB-AREAS**

	Downtown North	Salem/ Wall/Flume Corridor	Downtown South
Retail	Yes	Yes Only on first floor	Yes Only on first floor
Commercial Service	No	No	No
Visitor Commercial	Yes, but retail on first floor required	No	Yes
Office	Only above the first floor	No	Yes
Residential	Yes None on the first floor	Yes Permitted on all floors	No
Max. FAR (Non-residential uses)	2.0 — 6.0	0.5 — 2.0	2.0 — 4.0
Maximum Residential Density (units/gross acre)	50	30	50

Note: Combined maximum FAR and residential density may not be achievable because of height, site coverage, parking or other requirements. The intent in providing these maximums is to permit a greater level of flexibility for mix of uses.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

Chico provides a variety of retailing and commercial services for its residents as well for the Tri-county region, consisting of Butte, Tehama and Glenn counties. These range in scale from three malls located in close proximity to Highway 99 — Chico Mall, North Valley Plaza, and Skypark Plaza — to the Downtown, farmer's markets, and several neighborhood-oriented shopping centers.

To ensure that a diverse range of shopping opportunities are available and easily accessible, the Plan provides for new neighborhood centers, located closer to where people live and designed with the pedestrian in mind, and for increased convenience-good opportunities in existing neighborhoods where suitable sites are available.

Chapter 6: Economic Development outlines the retail sales prospects in the Planning Area. The General Plan provides 460 acres for additional commercial development, not including development in Downtown. This compares with 760 acres of existing commercial uses in 1993. Principles that provide a basis for location and distribution of commercial uses on the General Plan Diagram and policies that follow include:

- ▶ **Provision of more neighborhood-oriented shopping facilities.** The General Plan provides sites for several neighborhood-oriented shopping and commercial uses in both new and existing neighborhoods, including 80 acres for mixed-use neighborhood cores. As illustrated in Figure 3-6, implementation of the Plan would bring a substantially increased population within a convenient distance of a neighborhood center.
- ▶ **Site for a new regional-retail center.** While land is available in proximity to the existing malls in the Highway 99/Skyway and 20th street area, there would be a need for a smaller regional-retail center. The General Plan provides a 55-acre site for this between The Esplanade and Highway 99 north of West Eaton Road.
- ▶ **Alternatives to strip-commercial development.** To enhance community character, expansion of automobile-oriented uses is restricted to existing areas designated for Commercial Services on the General Plan Diagram, and new commercial development is encouraged in compact, pedestrian-oriented centers.
- ▶ **Land supply in proportion to anticipated needs.** To ensure the viability of the proposed neighborhood centers, as well as Downtown, land designated for commercial uses corresponds closely to the need.

### **Guiding Policies: Commercial and Retail Land Use**

- LU-G-16 Maintain Chico's prominence as the center of retail activity in the Tri-County area.
- LU-G-17 Promote neighborhood identity and encourage use of alternative modes of transportation by providing local shopping centers that many residents can reach on foot or bicycle.
- LU-G-18 Require pedestrian-oriented design in new shopping areas and provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access from near-by residential, commercial, and retail areas. Encourage retrofit with such design and access in existing commercial centers where feasible.

*The Community Design Element provides details on how such design concepts can be achieved; see CD-G-39, CD-G-52, CD-I-22 and CD-I-26.*

- LU-G-19 Provide specific sites for automobile-oriented services. Limit expansion of "strip commercial" centers along Cohasset Road, East Avenue, and Park and Mangrove avenues.
- LU-G-20 Provide specific sites for new community-sized shopping facilities.

### **Implementing Policies: Commercial and Retail Land Use**

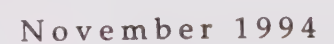
- LU-I-14 Establish use regulations, development standards and minimum performance requirements in the Zoning Ordinance consistent with the General Plan, and amend the Zoning Map to be consistent with the Land Use Diagram.

Use an overlay zoning designation for transit-served corridors, such as Park Avenue and Mangrove Avenue, to establish pedestrian-oriented design standards, restrict auto-oriented uses, control the size and location of surface parking, minimum parking requirements and encourage mixed-use development with bonus floor area for housing, or other incentive provisions.

- LU-I-15 Distribute shopping centers so that new neighborhood centers are located at least one mile away from existing major shopping centers (with 80,000 square feet or more of retail space).



Figure 3-6





- LU-I-16 Limit the size of commercial space in the neighborhood mixed-use centers to no more than 200,000 square feet of total floor space and 120,000 square feet of retail space.

Generally 120,000 square feet of retail space is considered adequate for a trade area of 12,000 residents. Design guidelines and limitations on store size within the mixed-use centers will ensure that new commercial development does not overwhelm the neighborhood.

*See CD-G-68, CD-G-69 and CD-G-70 in the Community Design Element.*

- LU-I-17 "Retrofit" existing neighborhoods that lack convenience retail facilities with small (3-5 acre-sized) neighborhood mixed-use centers, provided suitable sites are available. These sites are depicted on the Diagram and in Figure 3-6.

- LU-I-18 Permit neighborhood stores less than 2,500 square feet in size in residential areas outside the service areas depicted in Figure 3-6 wherever they can be supported and will not unduly impact existing neighborhoods.

Because the General Plan Diagram establishes sites for smaller, more-dispersed neighborhood centers, there should be less of a need for isolated stores in the future. The Zoning Ordinance should prescribe locational criteria and conditions for approval of stores outside the service areas, including spacing standards, lighting and buffering requirements, minimum and maximum lot size, building size, and the size, location, and landscape treatment for surface parking.

- LU-I-19 Limit expansion of automobile-oriented uses along Park and Mangrove avenues, Cohasset Road, Esplanade, north of Lindo Channel, and East Avenue, east of North Avenue, and provide incentives in the Zoning Ordinance for redevelopment in these areas.

- LU-I-20 For development along East Avenue between North and Marigold avenues, adopt appropriate standards to improve the character of this corridor, including but not limited to site access, building and off-street parking orientation to street, building height, on-site lighting, transitional requirements adjacent to residential uses, and incentives to encourage office/residential mixed use.



- LU-I-21 Urge the County to adopt appropriate zoning for sites in unincorporated areas designated for commercial use, such as along the Esplanade/Highway 99 corridor. Development and/or redevelopment in these street corridors should trigger installation of landscaping, medians, trees, sidewalks, and bike and pedestrian facilities designed to City standards.

### **3.6 PROFESSIONAL OFFICES AND R&D FACILITIES**

There will be an increasing need for new office development, both in free-standing office buildings within existing commercial areas and in new business parks. Sites that can accommodate flexible office space and research and development facilities will be in demand as the local economy matures.

The General Plan Diagram provides 240 acres for freestanding office development. Additional office space is provided Downtown and in industrial parks. Offices are also permitted in Community Commercial areas where new office uses may be located above the first floor or as a secondary use in multi-tenant buildings in order to promote retail continuity at the street level.



*Professional office complex at Foothill Park in northeast Chico*



### **Guiding Policies: Offices and R&D Facilities**

- LU-G-22 Encourage large-scale office development and research and development (R&D) facilities to locate in industrial parks at appropriate locations.
- LU-G-23 Encourage professional and administrative offices to locate in and near Downtown, in commercial centers and, in the case of medical offices, near hospitals.
- LU-G-24 Allow offices serving local needs within the community on specific "office only" sites and in mixed-use neighborhood cores as secondary uses.

### **Implementing Policies: Offices and R&D Facilities**

- LU-I-22 Establish use regulations, development standards, and minimum performance requirements for office development and R&D facilities in the Zoning Ordinance consistent with the General Plan, and amend the Zoning Map to be consistent with the General Plan Diagram.
- LU-I-23 Prohibit offices as a primary use where the land use designation on the General Plan Diagram is Commercial Service, Visitor Service, and Mixed-use Neighborhood Core.
- LU-I-24 Allow supporting retail and business services where the land use designation on the General Plan Diagram is Office.
- LU-I-25 Work with CSUC to promote the East of Airport industrial park area as a research park.

## **3.7 INDUSTRY**

The Planning Area was home to an estimated 5,050 manufacturing jobs in 1990 (see *Master Environmental Assessment* Section 2.3). An additional 775 persons were employed in wholesale trade. While the recent recession has resulted in a decline in the number of manufacturing jobs in the Chico Metropolitan Statistical Area (see *Master Environmental Assessment* Table 2-10), long-term growth prospects are projected to result in an increase of over 4,000 industrial jobs in the Planning Area over the Plan horizon.

Industrial uses in 1993 occupied about 770 acres, with light industrial uses accounting for about 68 percent of this total (1993 land-use survey for the City). Industrial uses are concentrated in the Airport Industrial Park, and south of the City in the Hegan Lane/Midway area and near the Skyway.

Because employment intensity (building space per employee) and site configuration, access and other requirements for different industrial uses vary dramatically, the General Plan provides about 1,840 acres of land for new industrial development in a variety of settings and locations. These include the area east and west of the Airport, and the Midway/Highway 99 area south of the City, access to which would be greatly improved with the construction of a proposed interchange. An industrial corridor between Nord Avenue and the railroad tracks, west of West 8th Avenue, is proposed as most compatible with the noise environment in this area.

Plan policies also seek to increase the supply of prezoned, "ready-to-go" industrial land to enhance Chico's competitiveness and decrease start-up time for new industrial development. Policies for industrial land use are presented below; specific policies for Airport-related industrial development are in Section 3.8.

### **Guiding Policies: Industry**

- LU-G-25 Provide appropriately located areas for a broad range of manufacturing, warehousing, and service uses to strengthen the City's economic base and provide employment opportunities for residents.
- LU-G-26 Protect the supply of land suitable for industrial use by not allowing incompatible uses to locate in industrial areas.
- LU-G-27 Provide sites for non-industrial land uses that complement industrial development or that require an industrial environment.
- LU-G-28 Achieve compatibility between industrial development and surrounding neighborhoods through buffering requirements and standards intended to minimize harmful effects of excessive noise, light, and glare and other adverse environmental impacts.
- LU-G-29 Ensure that industrial development is compatible with and does not adversely affect the natural environment.



*Industrial development at the Chico Municipal Airport*

### **Implementing Policies: Industry**

- LU-I-26     Establish use regulations, development standards, and minimum performance requirements for industrial development in the Zoning Ordinance, consistent with the General Plan, and amend the Zoning Map to be consistent with the General Plan Diagram.
- LU-I-27     Adopt setback, landscaping, and screening requirements for industrial development to protect adjacent non-industrial uses, and require a minimum physical separation and adequate buffering between manufacturing and warehousing and residential neighborhoods and commercial and recreation areas.
- LU-I-28     In new industrial areas, require master plans and infrastructure financing programs as a condition of subdivision approval, so haphazard development, without a coordinated plan for land use, circulation, infrastructure, and public services, does not occur.



- LU-I-29     Use the Chico Redevelopment Agency and the Chico Public Financing Authority to facilitate funding infrastructure improvements needed for industrial areas to accommodate expansion of existing industry or provide sites for new industry.
- LU-I-30     Seek LAFCO approval of a Sphere of Influence change that would include all industrial land designated on the General Plan Diagram.

*See also policies in the Economic Development Element on pre-zoning for industrial development, in the Transportation Element on truck routes, in the Community Design Element on design standards and landscaping at scenic entries, and in the Noise Element on land use compatibility standards.*

### **3.8     AIRPORT**

The Chico Municipal Airport, which the City acquired from the federal government in 1948 after the Chico Army Airfield was deactivated, has been an important focal point for industrial development as well as a facility for commercial and general aviation. This General Plan envisions a continued role for the Chico Municipal Airport in meeting the community's aviation needs and serving businesses that value proximity to the airport and hope to capitalize on the growing use of aircraft for shipping and "just-in-time" inventory control.

Aviation-related policies are included in the Transportation Element (see Section 5.8). In this section of the Plan, specific policies related to land use in the airport environs are presented.

The Butte County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) has adopted plans for airport land use compatibility in order to facilitate orderly development in the airport environs and avoid land use conflicts. According to the County, these are currently under revision. The ALUC also reviews certain development proposals within the designated referral area, which extends two miles from the boundary of the Airport. However, once local regulations are consistent with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans, project review is not required unless a Plan amendment is proposed posing a potential conflict. Noise contours for airports are shown in Figures 9-1 and 9-2.



### **Guiding Policies: Airport**

- LU-G-31 Protect the City's investment in the Municipal Airport and promote airport-related development in the Airport Industrial Park and Airport environs.
- LU-G-32 Safeguard the Chico Municipal Airport and its environs from intrusion by uses that could limit expansion of air services to meet future aviation needs. See Noise Element policies N-I-1 and N-I-2.
- LU-G-33 Prevent development in the Airport environs that will pose hazards to aviation or interfere with or endanger the landing, taking off, or maneuvering of aircraft.



*Entrance to Chico Municipal Airport Industrial Park*

### **Implementing Policies: Airport**

- LU-I-31 Ensure that the Airport Environs Plan and the General Plan are consistent and adopt and implement an Airport Noise Compatibility Program pursuant to Part 150 of the Federal Aviation Regulations.

- LU-I-32 Continue to apply and enforce zoning and land use regulations designed to promote compatible development of the Airport and its environs. Such regulations prevent development that would pose an airport hazard by establishing height limits and use restrictions and zoning districts that are specifically intended to promote compatible airport-related development.
- LU-I-33 Adopt an Airport Environs Overlay Zoning District, consistent with an updated Airport Environs Plan, including requirements for noise attenuation measures and noise agreements in areas subject to aircraft noise and navigation easements to be provided to the City permitting the right of flight in the airspace above development sites. The noise agreements should be required as conditions of approval of new development, major alterations, and additions or subdivisions in areas within the 55 CNEL contour. They would be recorded and should preclude law suits for damages or the enjoining of aircraft operations to limit noise exposure.
- LU-I-34 Require recorded notice of aircraft overflight for any development or subdivision within the Airport Environs in order to ensure that future property owners are aware of the Airport Environs Plan, current and anticipated aircraft flight paths, and restrictions that may result from ALUC's or the City's plans.
- LU-I-35 Maintain Federal Aviation Agency Airport Certification for commercial passenger traffic.

### **3.9 COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Small-scale community facilities, including residential care, day care, elderly care, and alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities, will be allowed within neighborhoods, consistent with state and federal law, because they are considered "protected" facilities and local zoning can not exclude them as long as specified standards and licensing requirements are met.

Large-scale community facilities are appropriate in mixed-use neighborhood cores and Downtown. A convention center and performing arts facility also would be appropriate Downtown or in Visitor-Commercial areas.

Churches and other places for religious assembly and private schools also will be permitted in residential and commercial areas, subject to appropriate development standards and use-permit requirements to ensure neighborhood compatibility.

For policies related to parks and public facilities, see Chapter 5: Parks and Public Facilities and Services and for law enforcement and fire services, see Chapter 8: Safety and Safety Services.

### **3.10 OPEN SPACE**

The land use classifications (Section 3.2) establish residential densities that are permitted on sites designated as Open Space on the Plan Diagram. Policies pertaining to open space are in Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation, and policies relating to regional form and use of open space to establish clear and continuous linkages within the urban area are located in Chapter 2: Community Design.

### **3.11 SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS**

This section features policies to guide development at specific sites, depicted on Figure 3-7. The intent is not to exhaustively list sites or development policies that pertain to the sites, but rather to provide direction that adequately reflects the City's concern and the debate that has accompanied Plan preparation. Requirements for detailed planning studies, including Resource Management Plans and area plans or specific plans, are also indicated.

#### **Guiding Policy: Special Development Areas**

- LU-G-33 Provide policies to guide development at specific sites critical to Plan implementation.

#### **Implementing Policies: Special Development Areas**

##### **Diamond Match**

- LU-I-36 Develop Diamond Match into an active mixed-use center accommodating a variety of commercial, industrial, residential, and public uses.



LU-I-37 As a condition of development approval, require preparation of a specific plan for the Diamond Match site. The Diamond Match Specific Plan should include:

- A Land Use Plan indicating the existing and proposed uses, maximum allowable building heights, lot patterns and configurations, and a Circulation Plan, including existing and proposed streets, driveways, parking areas, and transit service, if provided, and connections with the existing circulation system.
- An Open Space Plan, indicating existing vegetation and proposed planting areas, types and sizes of plant materials, and design of walkways, trails, recreation areas, paved areas, benches, water features, and lighting, plus use of open space areas.
- The proposed location, and capacity of major components of sewage, water, drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the Specific Plan.
- Standards and criteria by which development would proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
- A program of implementation measures, including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing mechanisms necessary to carry out the proposed Specific Plan.
- Guidelines for the physical development of the property, including illustrations of proposed architectural, urban design, and landscape concepts, showing a specific design "vernacular" compatible with the Southwest Chico neighborhood.

*Policies addressing physical planning for Diamond Match and linkages to surrounding neighborhoods are in Chapter 2: Community Design.*

LU-I-38 Ensure that the program for the site allows for adaptive reuse of existing buildings and provides a range of housing types (700 to 1,200 units at an average density of 7 to 15 units per gross acre), 4 to 6 acres of retail commercial space, 8 to 10 acres of office space, and 10 to 15 acres of neighborhood parkland. Up to 12 acres of light industrial uses would also be permitted provided they do not adjoin residences.



# Special Development Areas

Figure 3-7



 Special Development Area

Source: Blayne Dyett, 1994.



25  
ACRES

0 4,000' 8,000'

**City of Chico**  
GENERAL PLAN

November 1994



- LU-I-39     Require higher density residential uses to be located away from the Southern Pacific Railroad. Permit secured parks, open space, industrial and very low density uses within a 300-foot buffer adjoining the railroad right-of-way. Higher density residential uses would be permitted up to a distance of 100 feet from the railroad right-of-way provided exterior and interior noise levels are mitigated to standards specified in Section 9.5
- LU-I-40     Ensure that the overall intensity of development does not generate traffic exceeding 30 peak-hour trips per acre. This will ensure that the existing circulation system is not overloaded and level of service standards for streets are maintained.

**Westside of South Highway 99 – South of Entler Avenue**

- LU-I-41     Require Manufacturing and Warehousing development designated on the General Plan Diagram on the westside of Highway 99 south of the proposed interchange and Entler Avenue, and development on the east side of Highway 99, east of Peterson Tractor, to be clustered. Provide for transfer of development rights, if necessary, in order to preserve the cottonwood riparian habitat along Highway 99, and biological resources along the southern boundary of the sites.
- LU-I-42     Retain the existing stand of mature trees along the southern border of the Manufacturing and Warehousing development site.

**Foothill Development**

- LU-I-43     Ensure that development in the foothills is not intrusive and is in keeping with the natural character of the areas. In addition, development in the Humboldt Road area south of State Route 32, Foothill Park, and Bidwell Ranch should be consistent with special development area policies for these areas. Development plans for the foothills should ensure that:
- Grading is kept to a minimum;
  - Multi-use access and trails are preserved;
  - Native vegetation at the site is preserved and that native plants are used for landscaping where feasible;
  - Adequate provisions are made to minimize storm-water overflow and filtration of storm water prior to discharge;

- Perceived development intensity is minimized by locating development in low-visibility areas, keeping building heights low, and setting development away from State Route 32;
- Low impact street standards are used;
- Wildland fire provisions, as specified by the City are incorporated; and
- Links to bicycle/pedestrian systems are established.

**LU-I-44** Allow development in the foothills to be clustered and ensure that foothill views are protected. The site plans should be consistent with policies and standards in the Biological Resources section of the Open Space and Environmental Conservation Element.

**Humboldt Road – Foothills South of State Route 32**

**LU-I-45** Encourage residential development in Humboldt Road-Foothills area to be clustered on the western portion of the site, and allow for transfer of development rights from the eastern portion of the site to protect the foothills viewshed and sensitive biological habitat. Do not permit development at Low Density Residential or higher densities east of the 500 kv transmission line.

**Foothill Park**

**LU-I-46** Provide for transfer of development rights from the Low Density development area south of Sycamore Creek (Drake Property) to protect sensitive biological resources (Resource Conservation and Resource Management areas), subject to development policies and standards in the General Plan. The transfer of development rights would occur in conjunction with the development review process and within single property ownerships.

**Bidwell Ranch**

**LU-I-47** Allow up to 1,500 housing units, and 4-6 acre mixed-use neighborhood core for retail commercial uses serving Bidwell Ranch residents.

**LU-I-48** Consult with the Chico Unified School District to ensure that school needs are met in Bidwell Ranch.



**Airport Environs – East of Cohasset Rd.**

- LU-I-49 Allow 300-400 acres of land for Industrial Park development in the Airport Environs east of Cohasset Road, subject to a Resource Management Plan and a Specific Plan. The Specific Plan shall include:
- A Resource Management Plan (RMP), prepared prior to completion of the specific plan, to address protection of the area's biological resources and groundwater supplies;
  - A program to create and manage a permanent open space buffer along the east boundary of the area;
  - Guidelines for energy conservation, including solar orientation and passive and/or active solar design;
  - Guidelines and design standards to reduce visual impacts, including controls on building massing, height, color, and exterior materials; and
  - Measures to reduce the potential hazards of wildland fire.

*See also implementing policies in Section 3.8.*

**Bell Muir**

- LU-I-50 Work on an area plan with the County that would permit additional housing units in the Bell Muir area. The County will have the primary responsibility for Plan implementation and the planning process shall include participation of area residents.
- LU-I-51 Work with property owners and the County to maintain agricultural uses and parcel sizes in the area south of Mud Creek and north of Muir and Bell Roads.

**Foothill Area – North of State Route 32**

- LU-I-52 The area north of State Route 32 shall be designated as Open Space for Environmental Conservation and Safety and permit development at one dwelling unit per 40 acres. Up to 100 percent density bonus may be allowed through the planned development process provided that development is clustered and the remainder of the site is retained as permanent open space.

**CSA 87**

**LU-I-53** Work with the County and property owners to ensure that the specific plan for CSA 87:

- Does not include any urban residential or public assembly uses (including schools and day-care facilities) within the Airport overflight protection zone as recommended by the FAR 150 Phase II study;
- Provides adequate buffering between residential and offices and industrial uses;
- Addresses protection of the sensitive biotic resources on the site; and
- Provides adequate public facilities, including schools and parks, to meet the needs of the neighborhood population.

**LU-I-54** Land uses shown in area proposed as the village core in CSA 87 shall protect the long-term viability of the Airport and resources south of the existing Sphere of Influence. Further, the City will not pursue and would oppose inclusion of the area within the City's Sphere of Influence until the County and the Airport Land Use Commission adopted a plan for CSA 87 consistent with these objectives. Should the County's adopted plan vary from that shown on the Diagram, an amendment would be forwarded for Planning Commission and City Council consideration.

### **3.12 JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE**

A parity between the number of jobs and the number of employed residents is the most sure way of minimizing work-related travel, especially if residents' skills, job requirements, and the cost and availability of housing can be closely matched. In 1990, a high proportion (66 percent) of Chico workers worked within the City (see Table 3-18 in the *Master Environmental Assessment*). Ninety-two percent of Butte County workers worked within the County and the average commute to work for Planning Area residents was a relatively short 15 minutes.

**TABLE 3.12-1**  
**JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE**

	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs/ Housing Units
1990	32,675	31,732	1.0
Buildout	58,560	53,840	1.1

Sources: 1990 U.S. Census; California Employment Development Department; Blayney Dyett.

An estimated 3,175 non-Planning Area residents were employed in the Planning Area in 1990. If an average travel time to work of 30 or more minutes is an indication of residents working outside the Area, then about 5,175 Planning Area residents were employed elsewhere, resulting in a net shortage of about 3,000 jobs in the Planning Area. More detail on current workforce and employment in the Planning Area is provided in Section 2: Population and Economic Growth in the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

To maintain a balance between future workforce and jobs in the Planning Area, there would be a need for about 26,900 new jobs, for a total employment of about 58,600 or a jobs/housing units ratio of about 1.1 (Table 3.12-1).

The General Plan provides sufficient non-residential land (see Section 3.1) to ensure that space for employment opportunities in the Planning Area will be available for the resident workforce.

### **Guiding Policy: Jobs/Housing Balance**

- LU-G-34 Strive to maintain a balance between the number of jobs and the number of employed residents in the Planning Area, recognizing that some Chico residents will work elsewhere and some who work in Chico will live elsewhere.

*See also Chapter 6: Economic Development.*

### **Implementing Policies: Jobs/Housing Balance**

- LU-I-55     Establish periodic targets for new jobs based on economic development needs and focus economic development activities on efforts that will meet these targets. Implementing this policy will require coordination with other economic development initiatives described in Chapter 6.
  
- LU-I-56     Monitor changes in the number of jobs by sector, workforce characteristics, and residents' commuting patterns, and work with local industry and business leaders to target those with the greatest imbalance.

*See also Housing Element policies on affordable housing.*







## 4 TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Chico strives to create a balanced transportation system that serves bicyclists and pedestrians as well as motor vehicles. The original grid layout provided street connections linking neighborhoods with work places. As the community has grown, connections between neighborhoods, shopping areas, and business locations have not always served residents' transportation needs, so the General Plan provides for new routes in partially developed portions of the Planning Area, and expansion of capacity and efficiency of the existing system; the Plan also provides ways to reduce auto-dependence by facilitating use of alternate modes of travel.

Chico's transportation network is characterized by two state highways, one each running north-south and east-west, and a number of arterial streets providing regional and local access. Sixty percent of Chico residents work and reside in the Chico City limits (see Table 4-1). Mobility within the City is generally good with an average commute time to work of 14 minutes (see Table 4-2). This is in part a result of the City's compact form and the availability of amenities (e.g., commercial centers, educational institutions, medical facilities, recreational sites) within the City limits. This combination of compact urban form and arrangement of land uses minimizes the need for long trips to work or other destinations.

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**TABLE 4-1**  
**WORKERS' COMMUTING PATTERNS, 1990**

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Place of Work	Percent of Workers	
	Chico City	Butte County
Chico City	66.1	40.9
Other Butte County	26.7	50.8
Outside Butte County	7.0	8.2
Out of State	0.2	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0
Total Workers	18,085	69,561

Note: For total civilian and military workers 16 years and over. Excludes those with jobs but not working (for example ill or on vacation).

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.

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### **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

The Transportation Element responds directly to the Government Code, which requires "a circulation element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element of the plan."

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

The Land Use Element includes policies related to the physical framework for development that the circulation system is designed to serve, and includes policies for the Airport environs. The Community Design Element addresses landscaping along major streets and planning for new neighborhoods to ensure street connectivity. It also addresses how to create pedestrian-friendly environments and design for alternate modes. The Noise Element includes policies to alleviate noise generated by traffic.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Detailed information related to existing transportation conditions is in Chapter 5 of the *Master Environmental Assessment*.



**TABLE 4-2**  
**COMPARISON OF COMMUTE TRIP LENGTH IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, 1990**

Area	Average Commute Trip Duration (in minutes)	Total Workers (16 years and over)
Chico City <sup>a</sup>	14.0	18,085
Greater Chico Area <sup>a</sup>	15.0	34,961
Butte County <sup>a</sup>	23.4	69,561
El Dorado County <sup>b</sup>	24.6	57,547
Placer County <sup>b</sup>	22.9	81,522
Sacramento County <sup>b</sup>	21.1	482,321
Stockton City <sup>a</sup>	20.0	77,487
Sutter County <sup>b</sup>	16.7	26,137
Yolo County <sup>b</sup>	17.5	64,555
Yuba County <sup>b</sup>	19.6	20,689

<sup>a</sup> 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Population: Transportation to and Place of Work, State Census Data Center.

<sup>b</sup> *Household Travel Survey Report #1*, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, December 1992.

Chico is truly a multi-modal city. The 1990 census shows that while the preferred method of transportation to work is the single-occupant-vehicle, with 74 percent of the Chico Urban Area work force driving alone, nine percent car pool or van pool, one percent take public transportation, seven percent bike, one percent motorcycle, four percent walk, and four percent either do something other than the above or work at home. These percentages reflect the high degree of bicycle use and walking to work by students of the California State University, Chico (CSUC) and Butte College.

Within City limits, the number of people commuting to work in something other than single-occupant-vehicles increases in comparison to commuting patterns in the Chico Urban Area. In fact, the 1990 census shows that 69 percent of the City's work force are driving alone, and seven percent car pool or van pool, two percent take public transportation, ten percent bike, one percent motorcycle, four percent walk, and five percent either do something other than the above or work at home.

The Transportation Element establishes policies to provide a multi-modal transportation system meeting the needs of pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as automobiles and trucks. A comprehensive system of streets and bicycle routes for the Planning Area is proposed, as well as level of service standards for automobiles and bicycles.

The Transportation Element is closely correlated with the Land Use Element to ensure that:

- ▶ **Alternatives to automobile trips are encouraged** by promoting a compact urban form and providing neighborhood amenities closer to where residents live.
- ▶ **Trip-lengths are kept to a minimum** by promoting mixed-use development, Downtown and neighborhood cores, transit-served corridors and office areas, and clustering higher density residential development closer to job centers.
- ▶ **The intensity and location of development that makes transit feasible is maintained.** A minimum residential density in new neighborhoods is established.
- ▶ **A street network that promotes flexibility of routes and more direct connections between and within neighborhoods is provided.**

This Element addresses transportation issues from a citywide to a neighborhood scale and the relationship between the local and the regional system and agencies. It also contains policies to ensure that existing uses and neighborhoods are not unduly impacted as the City grows. Appendix B includes an analysis of the traffic impacts of the General Plan and a list of major improvements to the street and bicycle system that would be necessary to accommodate planned growth.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL PROGRAMS**

The Transportation Element and Appendix B identify future circulation needs for a long-range planning horizon. These projects will be studied later in greater detail, and funding and implementation sources will be identified. Many of the projects, in order to be funded, must be part of local and regional programs, including the City's Capital Improvement Program, the Butte County Congestion Management Program (CMP), and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Once a project is in the RTIP, it is available for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The CMP ensures that an integrated approach to transportation programming decision making is followed. The CMP is intended to maintain transportation mobility in Butte County by establishing standards that encourage a balance of transportation modes, and by incorporating the transportation implications of land-use decisions in planning efforts.

The state-mandated CMP is implemented by the Butte County Association of Governments, which is responsible for overseeing local agency compliance with state law. Cities within the County are responsible for conformance with the adopted service level standards on the principal arterial system defined by the CMP, and for transit standards. They are also responsible for the adoption and implementation of a trip-reduction and travel-demand ordinance and for developing a program to analyze the impacts of land use decisions. Where deficiencies in the system exist, deficiency plans must be adopted and methods of correcting the deficiencies identified. If deficiencies go unmitigated, the City could lose a portion of its gas tax revenues. Projects on the CMP are eligible for the RTIP and STIP.

Additional funding sources are available through the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, which revamped the nation's surface transportation programs (e.g., highway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities) to give state and local agencies increased funding, greater flexibility, and greater responsibility to select the mix of projects best suited to meet local needs. The ISTEA legislation allows the City of Chico greater flexibility in determining federal funding for various surface transportation modes. This flexibility will help provide a more balanced transportation system and could impact the current funding structure if funds are shifted from street projects to transit projects or vice versa. No additional funds are available initially to the Planning Area, but this could change in the future.

## **4.1 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION**

Bicycling and walking are important alternative modes of transportation. Both modes are inexpensive, energy conserving, and non-polluting. Chico's flat topography, climate, and compact urban form make choosing to walk or bicycle a more attractive transportation option.

Within the City limits, the number of people commuting to work by bicycle or walking is 10 percent and 4 percent, respectively. Additionally, the presence of California State University, Chico provides a large resident student population whose primary mode of transportation is often bicycling or walking. Provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to encourage the use of these modes is an integral part of the General Plan strategy to reduce traffic congestion.

The City's 1991 *Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan*, identifies issues, needs, and deficiencies, recommends policies, and provides an action plan for the recommended bikeway system. The *Bicycle Plan* also addresses issues related to bicycle safety. According to the *Bicycle Plan*, accidents tend to occur where major vehicular conflicts exist in the central business district and along major arterials. Bikeway programs and projects are funded through a combination of assured and discretionary funding. The City collects a transportation facility fee prior to the issuance of a building permit. A portion of this fee is for bicycles. Other sources include the state Bicycle Lane Account, Bicycle License fees, proceeds from the sale of unclaimed bikes, local transportation funds, ISTEA funds, the National Recreational and Trails Program, and the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Grant programs. Pedestrian facilities are programmed through the construction of roads and streets.

### BIKEWAYS CLASSIFICATION

Figure 4-1: Bicycle System, designates two types of bikeways, which are defined in Table 4.1-1. Bicycles would also be permitted on all local streets. The City follows Caltrans standards for the design of bicycle facilities.<sup>1</sup>

### LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

According to the *Fundamentals of Traffic Engineering, 13th Edition*<sup>2</sup>, bicycle flow patterns for Class I and Class II facilities are governed by the relationship between the bicyclists' flow rate, density, and speed. In areas of dense bicycle use, the more bicyclists there are, the slower they will go. Based on research in Davis, California, a statistical relationship between the volume of bicyclists, the density, and speed and service level was formulated (see Table 4.1-2). These service levels can be used as guides for planning improvements to Chico's bikeway system.

On streets without dedicated provisions for bicycle traffic, the bicycle flow rate depends largely on traffic stream characteristics. Methods for analyzing the impact of bicycles on these facilities or at intersections are still being perfected. For the General Plan, all streets not designated as Class II facilities should be designed to permit safe bicycle travel as they will serve in effect as Class III facilities (i.e., facilities shared with automobiles or pedestrians).

Areas where standards may prove helpful in monitoring bicycle use are delineated on Figure 4-1 and include:

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<sup>1</sup> California Department of Transportation, *Bikeway Planning and Design*, reproduced from the California Department of Transportation *Highway Design Manual, Fourth Edition, Chapter 1000*, July 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Institute of Transportation Studies, *Fundamentals of Traffic Engineering*, 13th Edition, University of California, Berkeley. UCB-ITS-CN-92-1.



- ▶ Downtown and routes feeding into Downtown where higher bicycle volumes might at some point require improvements (e.g., wider bike lanes);
- ▶ The California State University, Chico campus, and routes feeding into the campus including Warner Street; and
- ▶ Other areas such as Bidwell Park, Chico Mall, North Valley Plaza, Chico High School, and Pleasant Valley High School.

Future increases in bicycle flow in major corridors where bicycling is promoted also could warrant monitoring to ensure safety and adequate capacity. Because establishment of service level standards for bicycles would depend on the results of the monitoring and further studies, the General Plan outlines a process for adoption of standards when demand in certain corridors is high, or safety issues due to system demand arise. Major bikeway improvements are included in Appendix B. Priorities for projects will be set in the City's Capital Improvement Program.

## PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Pedestrian flow patterns show similarities to vehicular traffic stream characteristics. Speed, flow rate, and density are interrelated. Capacity and density for pedestrians are dependent on width of the walking facility and the type of walking facility (e.g., walkways, crosswalks, and street corners). For crosswalks, pedestrian capacity and waiting time is affected by turning vehicles, signal timing, pedestrian/vehicle right-of-way laws, and pedestrian platoons meeting in the middle of the street. Street corners at signalized intersections are holding areas as well, and can be a critical location in the sidewalk network.

While in Chico sidewalk capacity is not an issue, in general, all areas should be designed to a scale that accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists. Areas within the City that currently have undersized or no pedestrian facilities, particularly any that exist Downtown, near the California State University, Chico campus, and any school site, should be made a priority so that the pedestrian system will be better connected. The new neighborhood centers should also be designed to be "pedestrian friendly." In these areas, wider sidewalks should be considered to accommodate increased flows and to give preferential treatment to pedestrians. Pedestrian-friendly facilities should also be provided near transit stops and adjacent to medium and higher density residential areas.

**TABLE 4.1-1**  
**BIKEWAY CLASSIFICATIONS**

	<b>Function</b>	<b>Access Control</b>	<b>Right-of-Way</b>
Class I - Bike Paths	Provide exclusive right-of-way for bicyclists with cross flows by motorists minimized.	Where crossing or access from the bicycle path is required, the crossing should be grade-separated or occur at pedestrian crossings. Mid-block crossings should assign right-of-way through signing or signalization.	Minimum of 8 feet for a two-way facility. The minimum paved width for a one-way bike path is 5 feet. A minimum 2-foot wide graded area shall be provided adjacent to the pavement, but a 3-foot graded area is recommended. Where pedestrian activity is expected, a minimum of 12 feet for a two-way facility should be provided.
Class II - Bike Lanes	To provide preferential use of the paved area of roadway for bicyclists by establishing specific lines of demarcation between areas reserved for bicycles and motorists.	Access is similar to that recommended for roadways. At intersections where there is a bike lane and an actuated signal, it is desirable to install bicycle-sensitive detectors. Push button detectors force the bicyclists to stop and actuate the push button. Because most accidents for bicyclists occur at intersections, clear bikeway design at intersections should be implemented through the use of signing and striping.	Class II bike lanes are one-way facilities. On roadways with parking, the bike lane is located between the parking area and the traffic lane with 5-foot minimums for the bike lane. Where parking is permitted and not marked, minimum width is 12 feet. On roadways where parking is prohibited, a minimum of 5 feet is required, including a 2-foot gutter.

Note: All residential streets are intended to be "bicycle friendly"; see policies T-I-12 and T-I-41.

Source: Korve Engineering, Inc.

# Bicycle System

Figure 4-1



Existing	Proposed	
		Class I
		Class II
		Monitoring Areas

Note: All city streets, unless otherwise designated or excluded for bicycle use by state law, will be maintained as Class III facilities. Where Class I or II facilities appear disconnected or end abruptly, there is connection through the area on City streets designed as bicycle friendly.

Although not depicted as monitoring areas, areas around schools, school/park and neighborhood mixed use areas should be monitored at regular periods to ensure bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Sources: *City of Chico Bicycle Plan*, 1990;  
Korve Engineering and Blayne Dyett, 1994.



0 4,000' 8,000'

**City of Chico**  
GENERAL PLAN

November 1994





**TABLE 4.1-2**  
**BICYCLE FLOW CHARACTERISTICS ON BIKE PATHS AND BIKE LANES**

Characteristics	Level of Service (LOS)					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Flow Rate <sup>a</sup> (bikes/min/ft)	< 4.4	4.4- 6.6	6.6- 10.0	10.0- 11.9	11.9- 13.2	Variable
Density (bikes/sq.ft.)	< .005	.005- .007	.007- .012	.012- .017	.017- .025	> .025
Cycling Speed (mph)	≥ 11.0	10.5- 11.0	9.5- 10.5	8.0- 9.5	6.0- 8.0	< 6.0

<sup>a</sup> Minimum bike path or bike lane width for which these figures apply are: LOS A- 8.0 ft; LOS B- 7.5 ft; LOS C- 3.5 ft; and LOS D- 3.2 ft. The greater widths shown for LOS A and B are necessary to allow free overtaking.

Source: Institute of Transportation Studies, University of California, Berkeley. *Fundamentals of Traffic Engineering, 13th Edition*. UCB-ITS-CN-92-1.

## Guiding Policies: Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

- T-G-1 Develop a system of sidewalks and bikeways that promote safe walking and bicycle riding for transportation and recreation.
- T-G-2 Provide safe and direct pedestrian routes and bikeways between and through residential neighborhoods and other places within the Planning Area, particularly where no or undersized facilities are provided.
- T-G-3 Provide adequate bicycle parking facilities.
- T-G-4 Improve safety conditions, efficiency, and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians through traffic engineering and law enforcement efforts and provide for shaded through-routes, where possible.
- T-G-5 Provide and plan for bicycle and pedestrian access to new development including on-site access for new residential development.
- T-G-6 Plan and design pedestrian facilities to meet the needs of disabled persons.

## **Implementing Policies: Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation**

### **Bicycle Circulation**

- T-I-1 Institute a mechanism for monitoring bicycle service levels in high commute corridors in the areas depicted on Figure 4-1.
- T-I-2 Examine the need for bicycle service level standards for commute trips based on the results of monitoring bicycle use in the areas shown in Figure 4-1; use standards for bicycle commuting and information on accidents to determine necessary improvements to maintain Level of Service C or better.
- T-I-3 Make bikeway improvements a funding priority by:
- Continuing to consider financing bikeway design and construction as part of the City's annual construction and improvement fund.
  - Incorporating bikeway improvements as part of Capital Improvement Program; and
  - Pursuing ISTEA funding and other sources for new bikeways to the extent possible under federal and state law.
- T-I-4 Implement the bikeway plan shown in Figure 4-1 by:
- Adding bike lanes whenever possible in conjunction with road reconstruction or re-striping projects and subdivision development and related off-site improvements;
  - Improving existing crossings and providing for future crossings of creeks, railroads, and roadways;
  - Seeking funding sources to implement the bikeway plan in locations where more than re-striping is required; and
  - Working with Butte County and other agencies to implement a regional bikeway system.
- T-I-5 Establish a target to double commuter bicycle ridership in the City of Chico from 10 percent to 20 percent over a 30-year period and update the *Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan* as necessary to achieve that target.

- T-I-6 Require provision of secure covered bicycle parking at all existing and future multiple-family residential, commercial, industrial, and office/institutional uses. Secure parking means areas where bicycles can be secured to a non-movable rack to prevent theft.
- T-I-7 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the TSM Ordinance (see Section 4.2), and establish a program to promote bicycle use by large employment centers with 100 employees or more and by City employees.
- T-I-8 Provide incentives for new or expanding multi-tenant commercial and industrial projects and large employers to provide secure bicycle parking, lockers, and showers for employees, where feasible. Incentives may include reduced fees or reduced parking requirements.
- T-I-9 Require pedestrian access and bikeway connections to the citywide system every 500 feet, where feasible, as part of subdivision review.
- T-I-10 Retrofit existing cul-de-sacs, where feasible, to provide enhanced bike and pedestrian linkages between neighborhoods.
- T-I-11 Continue to encourage California State University, Chico to reintroduce opportunities for safe bicycle access into and through the main campus area.
- T-I-12 Increase bicycle safety by:
- Providing bicycle paths and lanes that promote bicycle commuting;
  - Sweeping and repairing bicycle lanes and paths on a regular basis;
  - Ensuring that bikeways are delineated and signed in accordance with Caltrans' standards, and lighting is provided, where needed;
  - Providing bicycle paths and lanes on bridges and overpasses;
  - Ensuring that all new and improved streets have bicycle-safe drainage grates and are free of hazards such as uneven pavement and gravel; and
  - Provide adequate signage and markings warning vehicular traffic of the existence of merging or crossing bicycle traffic where bike routes and paths make transitions into or across roadways.

- T-I-13 Give bikes equal treatment in terms of provisions for safety and comfort on arterials and collectors as motor vehicles.
- T-I-14 Promote bicycle use by maintaining a regularly updated map of Chico and regional bikeways.
- T-I-15 Work with the Chico Unified School District to promote classes on bicycle safety in the schools.
- T-I-16 At high volume bicycle/automobile intersections that have actuated signals, install bicycle detector loops and consider the feasibility of providing mid-block, bicycle-activated signals, where appropriate.
- T-I-17 Explore the feasibility of additional bike-routes parallel to Bidwell Park and an east-west couplet in Downtown, using 2nd and 3rd or 4th streets to improve bicycle circulation.

*See also Community Design Element policies on continuity and connections (CD-G-19 to CD-G-21).*

#### **Pedestrian Circulation**

- T-I-18 Implement a program to install handicapped ramps at all intersections as street improvements are being installed.
- T-I-19 Provide for pedestrian-friendly zones in conjunction with the development, redevelopment, and design of mixed-use neighborhood core areas, the Downtown area, schools, parks, and other high use areas by:
- Constructing wide sidewalks where feasible to accommodate increased pedestrian use;
  - Providing intersection "bulbing" to reduce walking distances across streets in the Downtown and other high use areas;
  - Continuing with the City's current policy of providing pedestrian facilities at all signalized intersections;
  - Providing landscaping that encourages pedestrian use; and
  - Constructing adequately lighted and safe access through subdivision sites.



T-I-20 Set City standards for pedestrian facility design to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

T-I-21 Require new local streets to connect with existing local streets and arterials, and permit cul-de-sac streets in urban residential areas only where bicycle and pedestrian access between cul-de-sacs, adjacent streets, and/or open space areas is integrated with an areawide pedestrian/bicycle system.

*See also policies in Section 4.4 and in the Community Design Element (CD-I-20, CD-G-74, CD-G-75, and CD-G-78).*

## 4.2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT

The term "Transportation Systems Management" (TSM) refers to measures designed to reduce peak-period auto traffic, by making more efficient use of existing transportation resources, and emphasizing ridesharing and non-auto alternatives. These include public transit, flexible working hours, car- and van-pooling, and incentives to increase the use of these alternatives. TSM has become increasingly important in the effort to enhance mobility through efficient use of alternative modes of transportation, and in meeting federal and state air quality standards.

A successful TSM program is an essential and important element in the continuing effort to achieve acceptable levels of traffic service. (See Section 4.3 for LOS standards.) The specific objectives of TSM are to:

- ▶ Reduce peak-hour traffic congestion by reducing the number of single occupant vehicle trips associated with commute trips;
- ▶ Reduce or delay the need for street improvements by making more efficient use of existing facilities;
- ▶ Reduce future air pollution concentrations and strive to meet state and federal ambient air pollution standards by reducing the number of single-occupant vehicle trips associated with commute trips; and
- ▶ Reduce consumption of energy for transportation uses, thereby contributing to the national policy of increasing energy self-sufficiency.

Reducing the number of single-occupant vehicle commute trips will result in an increase in the percentage of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit trips. Average trip length and overall vehicle-miles travelled will also be reduced.

### **TRANSIT**

Chico currently has a fixed route transit service in the urban area. When higher employment and residential densities are reached at full development, public transit should play a larger role in transportation, particularly for commute trips. The City has recently developed a comprehensive plan for the Chico Area Transit Service (CATS) for the next five years (through fiscal year 1997-98). The plan proposes a number of improvements, including:

- ▶ Restructuring and expanding of services to increase both ridership and efficiency;
- ▶ Developing a Downtown transit center;
- ▶ Adopting new policies on vehicles and alternative fuels; and
- ▶ Providing enhanced signage, information, and marketing programs.

These improvements should enable CATS to accommodate future growth as efficiently as possible while maximizing the system's benefits to the community and responding to the regulatory requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Clean Air Act.

### **Guiding Policies: Transportation System Management**

- T-G-7 Establish a minimum 10 percent trip reduction goal that will result in no more than 59 percent single-occupant-vehicles during peak time periods for new and existing uses in new and existing employment areas.
- T-G-8 Develop a TSM program in cooperation with the local business community that will allow the community to meet the 10 percent trip reduction goal and continue a positive and supportive business environment.
- T-G-9 Ensure that major employers, including the City, implement TSM programs to reduce peak-period trip generation.
- T-G-10 Cooperate with public agencies and other entities to promote local and regional public transit serving Chico.

## Implementing Policies: Transportation System Management

- T-I-22     Adopt a TSM plan or ordinance which creates specific requirements to reduce single-occupant-vehicle peak-hour trips by a minimum of 10 percent from the current ratio, and commit funding for adequate administration to promote and encourage compliance with the TSM ordinance.
- Sixty-nine (69) percent of peak-hour trips are in single-occupant vehicles, so with a minimum 10 percent reduction, the target is to have no more than 59 percent of peak-hour trips in single-occupant vehicles.
- T-I-23     Encourage major employers (100 or more employees), including the City, to adopt TSM programs to reduce peak-period trip generation by 10 percent or more from the vehicle trip generation currently observed at similar sites without a TSM program.
- T-I-24     Favor TSM programs that limit vehicle use over those that extend the commute hour. This policy will require adopting incentives to promote use of other modes of transportation.
- T-I-25     Monitor the frequency, routing and coordination of local transit service for consistency with the requirements of the Butte County CMP.
- T-I-26     Monitor system performance, percent single-occupant-vehicles, and trip reduction performance annually and adjust targets as appropriate.

## 4.3 STANDARDS FOR TRAFFIC LEVEL OF SERVICE

Traffic service levels for intersections and roadway segments are characterized by examining peak period operations. The standard used for measuring traffic flow is called a level of service (LOS) and volume-to-capacity (or demand-to-capacity). Levels of service are classified by a letter grade that describes the quality of flow, ranging from the best condition (LOS A) through extreme congestion associated with over-capacity conditions (LOS F). (See Table 4.3-1)

Traffic demand modeling assumes that travel demand is a *response* to the patterns of land use activity in a city and surrounding region. The modeling process for the Transportation Element uses existing and forecast land use and demographics as model inputs. These uses, and the people who live, shop, and work in and around Chico, generate the traffic that the model assigns to the circulation system. The land-use intensity also contributes to the magnitude of generated traffic; however, mixed-use environments with convenient pedestrian access generate

proportionally fewer additional automobile trips than areas devoted exclusively to a single use. Demographic descriptors such as income, household size, and vehicles per household affect traffic generation at the residential or household end.

These land use and demographic inputs are used in the traffic model to test the impacts of proposed land use and to forecast future levels of service (see Appendix B for details). This ensures that the Transportation and the Land Use elements are consistent and support the transportation goals, policies, and improvements outlined in this Element.

### **Guiding Policies: Standards for Traffic Level of Service**

- T-G-11 Strive to maintain traffic LOS C on residential streets and LOS D or better on arterial and collector streets, at all intersections, and on principal arterials in the CMP during peak hours.
- T-G-12 Accept LOS E for built-out areas served by transit after finding that:
- There is no practical and feasible way to mitigate the lower level of service; and
  - The uses resulting in the lower level of service are of clear, overall public benefit.
- T-G-13 Establish and implement engineering standards and cross-section specifications for Planning Area roadway networks, consistent with Table 4.4-1 and Caltrans adopted standards for highways and bicycle facilities. Continued coordination between the City and County on transportation standards will be needed.

### **Implementing Policies: Standards for Traffic Level of Service**

- T-I-27 Design roadway improvements and evaluate development proposals based on LOS standards.



**TABLE 4.3-1**  
**TRAFFIC LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS**

Level of Service (LOS)	Traffic Flow Conditions	Maximum Volume to Capacity Ratio
A	Conditions of free flow; speed is controlled by drivers' desires, stipulated speed limits, or physical roadway conditions.	0.6
B	Conditions of stable flow; operating speeds beginning to be restricted; little or no restrictions on maneuverability from other vehicles.	0.7
C	Conditions of stable flow; speeds and maneuverability more closely restricted; occasional backups behind left-turning vehicles at intersections.	0.8
D	Conditions approach unstable flow; tolerable speeds can be maintained but temporary restrictions may cause extensive delays; little freedom to maneuver; comfort and convenience low; at intersection, some motorists, especially those making left turns, may wait through one or more signal changes.	0.9
E	Conditions approach capacity; unstable flow with stoppages of momentary duration; maneuverability severely limited.	1.0
F	Forced flow conditions; stoppages for long periods; low operating speeds. Delays at intersections average 60 seconds or more.	> 1.00

Sources: Blayney Dyett; Korve Engineering.

- T-I-28     Implement, to the extent feasible, circulation system improvements illustrated in Figure 4-2 prior to deterioration in levels of service below the stated standard. These circulation system improvements will accommodate traffic generated by new development with Plan buildout. Recommendations in the traffic report in Appendix B include a list of major roadway improvements.
- T-I-29     Improve intersections as needed to maintain LOS standards and safety on major arterials.
- T-I-30     In order to ensure that adequate traffic capacity is provided for the buildout of the General Plan and that new developments do not preclude the construction of adequate circulation facilities, require all new developments to provide right-of-way and improvements consistent with street designations on Figure 4-2 and City street section standards.
- T-I-31     Establish and implement additional programs to maintain adequate levels of service at intersections and along roadway segments as circumstances warrant, including the following actions:
- As part of the monitoring effort set up for TSM and CMP program compliance (Policy T-I-26), collect and analyze traffic volume data on a regular basis and monitor current intersection and roadway segment levels of service on a regular basis. Use this information to update and refine the City's travel forecasting model so that estimates of future conditions are more strongly based upon local travel behavior and trends.
  - Consider, on a case by case basis, how to shift travel demand away from the peak period, especially in those situations where peak traffic problems result from a few major generators (e.g. outlying employment locations), and how major roadway capital investments can be deferred and/or reallocated to more pressing needs.
  - Perform routine, ongoing evaluation of the efficiency of the urban street traffic control system, with emphasis on traffic signal timing, phasing and coordination to optimize traffic flow along arterial corridors. Use traffic control systems to balance arterial street utilization (e.g., timing and phasing for turn movements, peak period and off-peak signal timing plans).

## 4.4 STREET NETWORK AND CLASSIFICATION AND AUTOMOBILE CIRCULATION

The relationship between residential density, land use mix, location and extent of local employment opportunities, street layout, and urban infrastructure defines the nature of traffic and the modal choices available. Expansion of the City grid system and provision of shorter blocks allows for more travel choices. A greater number of street connections available to bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists means that narrower streets would be able to accommodate peak demand and require fewer wide arterial streets. Transit should be provided on streets that are direct and accessible to pedestrians, and neighborhood centers should be accessible to all modes of transportation via neighborhood collector streets that reflect the scale and community character of the neighborhood.

### STREET CLASSIFICATION

The system of state routes, arterials, and collector streets is shown on the Land Use Diagram. These streets should be designed to provide for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. In some residential neighborhoods, alternate street widths may be appropriate to promote "liveability" and reduce the dominance of the automobile. *This option is addressed further in the Community Design Element (see CD-G-78).*

**Freeways.** Freeways serve regional and inter-city travel and should not become the optimum route for intra-city trips. Access is controlled, grade crossings are separated, and medians separate lanes moving in opposite directions. Typical free flow speeds exceed 55 miles per hour.

**Expressways.** Expressways are designed to carry heavy traffic volumes at speeds of 40-55 miles per hour. Expressways should serve longer distance intra-city travel as well as linking the City with other nearby urban areas. Access is limited, crossings are generally signalized at grade, parking is not allowed, and a continuous median separates lanes in opposite directions.

**Major and Minor Arterials.** The primary function of major arterials is to move large volumes of traffic between freeways and other arterials within Chico and to adjacent jurisdictions. Major arterials should provide four travel lanes, a raised or painted median, and bike lanes. On-street parking should not be provided. Minor arterials should provide two travel lanes and bike lanes. On-street parking could be provided. Driveway access should be minimized, consistent with the primary function of arterials to move through traffic. Bike lanes, landscaped parkstrips, sidewalks, and transit facilities are also accommodated within the right-of-way.

**Collectors.** Collector streets provide a link between local streets and arterials. Collectors provide two travel lanes, in addition to any bike lanes where called for in the bikeway plan. In fact, all collectors should be designed to include bicycle lanes. On-street parking may be provided if sufficient width is available. Collectors also provide access to adjacent properties, so driveway access should be discouraged but need not be restricted (subject to accepted engineering practice). Collector streets are shown on the General Plan Diagram. Bike lanes, landscaped parkstrips, sidewalks, and transit facilities are also accommodated within the right-of-way.

**Local Streets.** The primary function of local streets is to provide direct access to adjacent properties. Local streets should provide two travel lanes, landscaped parkstrips, sidewalks, and on-street parking. On-street parking may be restricted. Bike lanes may not be needed because local streets carry low traffic volumes and all local streets are considered to be bicycle friendly. Local streets are not shown on the General Plan Diagram or Figure 4-2: Circulation System.

**Rural Streets.** Within the Planning Areas are streets that are rural in character. These should provide two travel lanes, no parking, and bike lanes where indicated in the bikeway plan. The main distinguishing features between rural streets and local streets is that the rural streets tend to be narrower, and without curbs and gutters. Rural streets are not shown in the General Plan Diagram or Figure 4-2: Circulation System.

## **MAJOR STREET IMPROVEMENTS**

To achieve a balance between land use and the traffic carrying capacity of streets, peak-period traffic conditions were evaluated by comparing projected traffic volumes to roadway and intersection capacities. Service levels at study intersections and roadways were determined using standard traffic analysis methodology for signalized intersections, two-way stop intersections, multi-way stop intersections, and roadway segments.

Where conditions were projected to create severe traffic congestion, an iterative process to reduce traffic by rearranging land uses and increasing traffic capacity through improvements (i.e., construction of new lanes) was undertaken. A listing of major street improvements required to accommodate buildout of the General Plan can be found in Appendix B.



### **Guiding Policies: Circulation and Street System**

- T-G-14 Promote safe and efficient vehicle circulation.
- T-G-15 Use Figure 4-2: Circulation System, to identify, schedule, and implement roadway improvements as development occurs.
- T-G-16 Make efficient use of existing transportation facilities, and, through the arrangement of land uses, improved alternate modes, and provision of more direct routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, strive to reduce the total vehicle-miles travelled.
- T-G-17 Provide fair and equitable means for paying for future street improvements.
- T-G-18 Coordinate local actions with state and County agencies to ensure consistency.

### **Implementing Policies: Circulation and Street System**

- T-I-32 Adopt street standards that provide flexibility in design, especially in residential neighborhoods. Revise right-of-way and pavement standards to reflect adjacent land use and/or anticipated traffic, and permit reduced right-of-way dimensions where necessary to maintain neighborhood character.
- T-I-33 Continue using the Capital Improvement Program to implement needed improvements to the street system where Transportation System Management can not ensure mobility and maintenance of service level standards.
- T-I-34 Continue to require that new development pays a fair share of the costs of street and other traffic and transportation improvements based on traffic generated and impacts on service levels.
- T-I-35 Continue to work with Caltrans to achieve timely construction of programmed freeway and interchange improvements and state highway improvements.
- T-I-36 Locate arterials and collectors according to the general alignments shown in Figure 4-2. Minor variation from the depicted alignments will not require a General Plan amendment.
- T-I-37 Require the appropriate action to establish precise alignments based on the General Plan Diagram and Figure 4-2: Circulation System in order to identify future right-of-way needs.

- T-I-38 Review proposed designs for arterial streets and large traffic generating uses with transit service in mind, and require arterial streets to be designed to provide for bus loading and unloading without disruption of through traffic, as shown in Table 4.4-1.
- T-I-39 Work with the Butte County Association of Governments to ensure that General Plan amendments are incorporated in the countywide traffic model and incorporated into analysis required for the biennial updates to the County *Congestion Management Plan*.
- T-I-40 Maintain the street network through a regular maintenance program, repave streets on a regular basis, and require that any pavement that has been damaged or dug up be returned to its original condition, with no bumps or ruts. Street maintenance and repaving programs should be based on current technology and accepted practices to maximize available revenues and improvements.
- T-I-41 Facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. Actions that could enhance safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles include:
- Provide for bike and pedestrian crossings of arterials.
  - Provide traffic enforcement to deter traffic violations and ensure mobility, particularly in congested areas during commute and peak recreational hours.
  - Analyze pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle accident reports to determine common locations and causes so as to plan for selective enforcement and engineering solutions (i.e., signing, speed bumps, traffic circles, medians) in problem areas and to improve bicycle routing and traffic circulation.
  - Continue and enhance parking control enforcement efforts and abandoned vehicle enforcement and removal.
- T-I-42 Identify streets, such as Vallombrosa, that have scenic value and deserve development of specific scenic standards.
- T-I-43 Explore the feasibility of extending Bruce Road north to the future Highway 99/Skyway interchange.

**T-I-44** To maintain adequate Levels of Service at freeway ramp/cross arterial intersections, the following actions will be implemented in cooperation with Caltrans. These are intended to reflect a combined approach of maximizing operational and low-construction cost alternatives, modifying travel patterns, and evaluating the appropriate level of service requirement for freeway operations.

- Review intersection control systems (signals, signing, marking) and check for adherence to standards, together with review of access control options on arterial street approaches. Closing and/or restricting movements at driveways, providing alternate site access routes, and purchasing access rights should be considered.
- Evaluate operational control options including peak period turn prohibitions to increase intersection capacity, and approach signal timing along arterial streets.
- Evaluate interchange locations for opportunities for reconfiguration of lane layouts, possibly requiring design exceptions, to add maneuver lanes to accommodate especially heavy movements. Reassess right-of-way availability.
- Conduct regular traffic monitoring studies of peak period freeway operations and determine the extent to which local traffic uses SR 99 as an "arterial" roadway for travel between adjacent or second interchanges, instead of using surface arterial streets. Evaluate options for changes in traffic control systems to favor arterial street travel for short, local trips.
- Evaluate each freeway interchange location for operational effectiveness at different levels of service, and consider changing LOS standard for ramp/arterial street intersections.

## **4.5 NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS**

Chico's traditional grid system allows for through movement and good connections between and within neighborhoods. Short blocks offer a choice of routes and enable more direct connections. While Chico's traditional neighborhoods, such as the Avenues and Chapmantown, are based on an orthogonal grid, variations can also allow for diagonal and curvilinear streets as well as larger or smaller blocks for maximum flexibility and improved connectivity.

Many of the new neighborhood development plans (with loops and cul de sacs) provide quieter environments for residents, but at the same time are somewhat isolated from other neighborhoods and can also cause areas within neighborhoods to be poorly connected. These types of designs promote circuitous travel and result in traffic being distributed along fewer streets where heavy traffic walls-in neighborhoods and requires sound walls. More desirable is development that balances sense of proximity and ease of access provided by the grid systems with the quieter, traffic-free interior environments of the newer neighborhoods.

In order to ensure that street layout in new development incorporates the need for neighborhood connectivity and the comfort and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists consistent with the Community Design Element, it is essential that:

- ▶ New development be more "connected" to the surroundings with an increased number of access points and pedestrian and bicycle connections to the neighborhood network;
- ▶ Blocks be short to allow for more direct connections;
- ▶ Pedestrian and bicycle routes be fronted by porches, living areas, and landscaping, instead of garages, parking, storage areas, and sound walls, in order to provide visual interest as well as increased surveillance; and
- ▶ Neighborhood streets remain unimpacted by greater traffic and parking from adjacent commercial developments as a result of "opening-up" to the surroundings.

### **Guiding Policy: Neighborhood Streets**

- T-G-19 Provide for increased connections between and within neighborhoods for bicycles, pedestrians and, where appropriate, automobiles.

### **Implementing Policies: Neighborhood Streets**

- T-I-45 Provide for greater street connectivity by:

- Limiting the maximum block size in new development to 500 feet on all sides, where feasible;
- Incorporating in subdivision regulations requirements for a minimum number of access points to existing local or collector streets for each



development (e.g. at least two access points for every 10 acres of development);

- Encouraging, through incentives, parking to be located behind buildings, not between buildings and streets, and ensuring that street designs incorporate adequate on-street parking;
- Reducing the overall amount of land devoted to parking by encouraging shared parking and examining reduction of parking requirements that apply to individual uses for mixed-use developments;
- Encourage project proponents to limit the proportion of loop streets and cul de sacs and ensure that bicycle and pedestrian connections are provided from such streets; and
- Providing for future connections to the undeveloped edge and where connection to existing urban development is poor.

- T-I-46 Discourage speeding and "cut-through" traffic on local neighborhood streets by installing appropriate traffic control devices, such as bulbining and narrower street widths.
- T-I-47 Discourage parking intrusion in residential neighborhoods from commercial areas by adopting parking control strategies such as restrictions, signs, or permit systems, where appropriate.

## **4.6 PARKING**

It is important to balance the need for enough parking to sustain existing activity and attract new development with transit needs and the City's financial ability to meet other public needs. Parking decisions affect land use and development patterns, as well as travel behavior. The placement and type of parking must accommodate the needs of businesses (who view parking as a marketing tool), pedestrians (who can view parking as a barrier when parking blocks walking paths), motorists (who want to park as close to their destination as possible), and residents (who desire both on-street and off-street parking).

### **Guiding Policies: Parking**

- T-G-20 Expand public parking programs for the Downtown area to alleviate existing and future shortages.

- T-G-21 Require all new development outside of the Downtown area to provide off-street parking, but limit parking consistent with other policies of the General Plan related to transportation, air quality, resource conservation and historical preservation. Off-street parking requirements and needs can offset gains in pedestrian and bicycle amenities and landscaping in constrained locations. These limitations would apply to neighborhood centers, and mixed use developments where parking could be provided on-street and behind buildings off-street.

*See also Chapter 2: Community Design policies CD-G-65 and CD-I-26, on mixed-use neighborhood cores and commercial areas.*

- T-G-22 Coordinate parking with the roadway and transit systems and pedestrian circulation facilities.

### **Implementing Policies: Parking**

- T-I-48 Establish parking standards to support trip reduction goals by:
- Allowing parking reductions for projects that have agreed to implement trip reduction methods, such as paid parking, and for mixed-use developments; and
  - Requiring projects larger than 25 employees to provide preferential parking for carpools and vanpools.
- T-I-49 Work with local merchants to improve parking conditions in underserved commercial areas.
- T-I-50 Consider establishing parking fee schedules that give priority to parking for businesses, shopping, and other short duration activities over parking for longer duration commute trips.
- T-I-51 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include minimum parking requirements based on proximity to transit stations and development intensity. These standards should be examined as transit service changes. Parking above a minimum amount should be allowed only if additional amenities for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit and/or landscaping are provided.
- T-I-52 Investigate opportunities for shared parking facilities whenever possible to reduce the number of new parking stalls required.

- T-I-53 Locate parking facilities within acceptable walking distances of the facilities they are expected to serve. Walking distances should not exceed 500 feet for short-term parking and 1,000 feet for long-term parking.
- T-I-54 Encourage the integration of parking with other land uses on the same site.

## **4.7 GOODS MOVEMENT**

Providing adequate circulation for trucks will help achieve the economic development policies of the Plan by facilitating transportation of manufactured goods and agricultural and consumer products. Designated truck routes are depicted on Figure 4-3. These routes are currently signed in the City and are designed to Caltrans' standards. Future truck routes would also include the southerly extension of Walnut Street and the extension of Eaton Road when they are constructed. The routes shown in Figure 4-3 serve as primary commercial truck movements entering and leaving the City. Trucks, however, can use any street to get to and from specific delivery locations.

### **Guiding Policy: Goods Movement**

- T-G-23 Provide adequate circulation and off-street parking and loading facilities for trucks and facilitate intermodal goods delivery.

### **Implementing Policies: Goods Movement**

*See also Airport signage policy in Section 4.8.*

- T-I-55 In consultation with Butte County and Caltrans, designate and provide signed truck routes, ensure that adequate pavement depth, lane widths, bridge capacities, loading areas, and turn radii are maintained on the designated truck routes, and prohibit commercial trucks from non-truck routes except for deliveries.
- T-I-56 Maintain design standards for industrial streets that incorporate heavier loads associated with truck operations and larger turning radii to facilitate truck movements.
- T-I-57 Continue to ensure adequate truck access to off-street loading areas in commercial areas.

- T-I-58 Consult with freight forwarders and trucking services on specific needs to facilitate intermodal goods movement.

## **4.8 AIRPORTS**

The Chico Municipal Airport is a valuable resource for business and recreational air travel. The Ranchero Airport is a private airport used for small, general aviation flights. Land use policies for the Airport environs are in Section 3.8 of the Land Use Element, and noise contours for airports are shown in the Noise Element.

### **Guiding Policy: Airport**

- T-G-24 Maintain and improve Chico Municipal Airport for commercial and general aviation and for special aviation needs, including facilities for propeller, turbo, motorcraft and jet aircraft.

### **Implementing Policies: Airport**

- T-I-59 Periodically update the Chico Municipal Airport Environs Plan and monitor aviation activity and aviation needs.
- T-I-60 Ensure that compatible land use policies are followed in areas adjacent to the airport.
- T-I-61 Work with Caltrans to establish signage to direct motorists and truckers to the Municipal Airport from Highway 99.

## **4.9 RAILROADS**

The City of Chico is served by the Southern Pacific Transportation Company and Amtrak. Existing track provides the opportunity for expansion and improvement of rail passenger services. These improvements could include increased frequencies to the existing rail station or exploring options for minimizing rail/vehicle/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts. Currently Amtrak serves the City of Chico once a day. The Coast Starlight stops in Chico as part of its Los Angeles to Seattle run. The northbound train arrives in Chico at 1:43 a.m. and the southbound train arrives at 3:01 a.m. daily. It is likely that a grade separation at Second Street and East Avenue will be needed sometime in the near future.

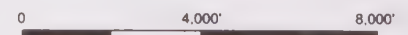


Figure 4-3



Truck route along Eaton Road west of the Esplanade is proposed and subject to the precise location of the future road.

25  
acres



November 1994





*Planes line parking apron at Chico Municipal Airport*

### **Guiding Policy: Railroads**

- T-G-25 Explore opportunities to increase rail passenger and inter-city bus transit services whenever possible.

### **Implementing Policies: Railroad**

- T-I-62 Continue the ongoing program to improve the condition and safety of existing railroad crossings by upgrading surface conditions and providing adequate signs and signals.
- T-I-63 Explore the potential of having grade-separated crossings based on state criteria and funding availability at:
- State Route 32 at 8th/9th streets (this project is included in the Regional Transportation Plan);
  - Second Street east of Walnut Street;

- 8th Avenue east of State Route 32; and
- East Avenue.

The California Grade Separation Fund, administered by the Public Utilities Commission, will pay up to 80 percent of project costs, up to \$5 million, unless the project will eliminate the need for another grade separation in the future, in which case the jurisdiction may receive up to \$20 million over a four-year period.

- T-I-64 Establish a program to facilitate financing of needed railroad improvements by providing assistance through mechanisms such as assessment districts or redevelopment agency financing.
- T-I-65 Cooperate with other agencies which are exploring the feasibility of increasing and expanding rail passenger service connections to Redding and Sacramento.
- T-I-66 Explore the feasibility of extending rail service to new industrial areas.

*The Community Design Element addresses the need to improve visual and physical connections to the Rail Depot (Policy CD-G-26).*

#### **4.10 INTER-CITY BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Inter-city bus transportation is provided by Butte County Transit, Greyhound, and Amtrak. Butte County Transit is a fixed route transit service and provides connections from Chico to other destinations in the County. Greyhound offers bus transportation daily to destinations outside of Chico as does Amtrak. Future demand for inter-city services can be expected to increase. Chico should monitor the demand for inter-city service and work to increase it where appropriate and feasible.

##### **Guiding Policies: Inter-city Bus Transportation**

- T-G-26 Work with providers to maintain and improve inter-city bus connections for passenger service.
- T-G-27 Continue to coordinate inter-city transit connections with existing and future Chico Area Transit System services.



### **Implementing Policies: Inter-city Bus Transportation**

- T-I-67    In consultation with Butte County Transit, Greyhound, and Amtrak, monitor demand for inter-city bus transit service and increase service as demand warrants.
- T-I-68    Maintain centrally located off-street bus facility for inter-city transportation until implementation of the Rail Depot is practical in the future.









## 5 PARKS, PUBLIC FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

A key premise of this General Plan is that growth should be guided by the ability of resources and services to sustain it. For public facilities and services, this means ensuring that new development does not create demands that can not be met without diminishing the quality of services to current residents and businesses. Specifically, this section of the General Plan establishes:

- ▶ Policies and standards for parks and recreation, open space, and public facilities and services that will maintain the quality of life in Chico;
- ▶ Thresholds and performance criteria for use in development review to gauge ability of public services to sustain the growth; and
- ▶ An equitable method for paying for facilities and services needed to accommodate new development.

For law enforcement and fire services and emergency management, please see Section 8: Safety and Safety Services.



*Butte County Library located at East First and Sherman avenues.*

### **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

The Parks, Public Facilities, and Services Element is an optional element of the General Plan under provisions of the Government Code which state: "the general plan may include any other elements or address any other subjects which, in the judgement of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county or city."

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

The Parks, Public Facilities, and Services Element establishes policies and standards for serving the land uses depicted in the framework for development established in the General Plan Diagram and Land Use Element. It also includes policies relating to the extension of services to unserved areas planned for development. The Transportation Element provides for circulation system improvements that will serve new development and establishes performance standards for transportation facilities, which are also used in Section 5.6: Resource-based Thresholds.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The *Master Environmental Assessment*, prepared in conjunction with the comprehensive update process, provides detailed background information on parks and public facilities and services.

## 5.1 PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

Abundant parkland and recreation facilities in the City and its vicinity are key elements of the quality of life enjoyed by the residents. In Chico, parks not only provide recreational opportunities for residents, but are also central to the City's character and image. Bidwell Park, one of the largest municipal parks in the nation, traverses almost the entire east-west length of the City and is a pivotal element of its urban form.

While overall the City has a parkland to residents ratio that is five to six times the average of other Central Valley communities, almost all of the City's parkland consists of Bidwell Park. Just over 100 acres are provided in neighborhood and community parks, and an additional 44 acres have been acquired for future neighborhood and community parks and school/parks. Recent growth in the north part of the Planning Area and elsewhere at the urban edge has led to increasing distances between new residences and Bidwell Park, bringing into focus the need for more neighborhood and community parks easily accessible to residents.

### SERVICE PROVIDERS

Park and recreation providers in the Planning Area are:

**Chico Area Recreation and Park District (CARD).** CARD's 225-square-mile service area includes all of the Planning Area and extends north to the Tehama County border. CARD is responsible for acquisition, development, and operation of community parks, as well as recreation programs, indoor recreation areas, and management of various facilities in the Chico area. Formed in 1948, CARD is governed by a five-member, elected board of directors. Day-to-day operations are overseen by a general manager.

**Chico Park Division.** The Park Division of the City is responsible for developing and maintaining Bidwell Park, and for maintaining City parks, street trees, and landscaping within public rights-of-way. Although the City owns a municipal course, it was developed and is operated by a private enterprise.

**Chico Unified School District (CUSD).** While schools are not recreation providers, school playground facilities are available for public use. Because an increasing number of schools are switching to a year-round schedule, availability of school playgrounds for recreation purposes is likely to become more limited. Current City and CARD policies promote development of new park facilities in conjunction with schools.

Section 18 of the *Master Environmental Assessment*, prepared as a background report, contains a description of the role and responsibilities of these agencies.



## **CURRENT PLANS**

Aside from the General Plan, two plans guide the provision of park and recreation facilities in the Planning Area:

**Park and Recreation Plan, CARD (1988).** The CARD master plan proposes park locations and describes improvements for existing facilities. Parts of the Plan were incorporated in the City's General Plan. Implementation of the Plan has been slow, primarily because of lack of funding.<sup>1</sup>

**Bidwell Park Master Management Plan (1990).** The Bidwell Park Master Management Plan, adopted by the City Council and the Bidwell Park and Playground Commission (BPPC), recommends practices for the Park's 32 management units and proposes improvements of certain facilities. The Plan recommends that the Park be managed by CARD under a joint powers or lease agreement with the City of Chico and that the tax burden for maintenance and improvements be spread to the CARD boundaries. The BPPC continues to implement the Plan on an ongoing basis.

## **INVENTORY AND CLASSIFICATION**

Existing parks and recreation facilities are listed in Table 5.1-1. As of early 1993, the Planning Area had about 2,470 acres of public parkland, excluding small greenways and other open space. Another 1,500 acres of parkland adjacent to Upper Bidwell Park are being purchased by the City. Definitions of the different park categories follow.

**Mini Parks and Plazas.** This is a category of parks, recreation areas, and plazas less than three acres in size. Facilities are not designed for structured or organized play but may contain play equipment.

**Neighborhood Parks.** This classification consists of parks, playgrounds, or a combination of the two, devoted primarily to serving a small portion of the City and designed for unorganized and unsupervised recreation activities. These parks are generally located within walking and bicycle distance of residences. Park facilities are usually oriented toward the recreational needs of children, but may also include volleyball courts, half-size basketball courts, and picnic and play areas that serve all age groups. Restrooms or off-street parking are usually not provided.

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<sup>1</sup>

Pertinent portions of the CARD Plan were incorporated in the City's General Plan in 1990, and are also reflected in this General Plan.



**TABLE 5.1-1**  
**PARK INVENTORY, 1993**

Park Name	Jurisdiction	Size (Acres)	
		Existing Facility	Under Acquisition/ Development
Regional Parks			
Lower Bidwell Park	City	370.5	
Upper Bidwell Park <sup>a</sup>	City	1,800.0	
Bidwell River Park	State	180.0	
BLM Bidwell Park Addition	City		40.0
South Rim Addition	City		1,207 - 1,420
Subtotal		2,350.5	1,247 - 1,460
Community Parks			
Humboldt	City/CARD		9.0
Wildwood	City/CARD		18.0
20th Street Community Park	CARD	31.5	
Hooker Oak Recreation Area	City/CARD	35.0	
1-Mile Dam Area		30.0	
Subtotal		96.5	27.0
Neighborhood Parks			
Chapman Park	CARD	3.0	
Humboldt Park	City/CARD	2.7	
1st Ave./Verbena Park	City/CARD		5.0
Ceres	City/CARD		5.4
Baroni	City/CARD		5.0
		5.7	15.4
School Parks			
Oak Way	City/CARD		6.1
Henshaw	City/CARD		6.2
Subtotal			12.3
Mini-Parks/Tot Lots			
Rotary Park	CARD	0.7	
Children's Park	City	2.7	
Plaza Park		1.6	
Subtotal		5.0	
TOTAL PARKLAND		2,457.7	1,301.7 - 1,514.7

<sup>a</sup> Excluding facilities listed under Community Parks (e.g. 1-Mile Dam).

Sources: *Park and Recreation Plan*, CARD, 1988; City of Chico Park Division, and CARD.

**Community Parks.** Community parks serve all ages and may include facilities for low-intensity/passive recreation use, lighted fields, courts, swimming pools, and areas and buildings for community festivals and civic events, as well as for organized sport and athletic competitions. Generally, restrooms and some off-street parking are provided. While community parks serve larger areas of the City than do neighborhood parks, they often also fulfill a neighborhood function. Community parks are usually 20 acres or larger.

**School Parks.** This classification consists of parks or playgrounds built adjacent to but separate from educational facilities, that may serve either a neighborhood or a larger area. Oak Way and Henshaw, Chico's first dedicated school parks, are about 6 acres each in size. The City's current policies call for development of neighborhood and community parks in conjunction with schools, where feasible.

**Regional Parks.** Regional parks are usually at least 50 acres in size and serve the entire City or region. While regional parks can provide for varying intensities of recreation activity, a portion of the park is generally maintained in a rustic setting for passive recreation use.

In addition to the park categories listed above, other categories of recreational open space include creekside greenways and trails along the creeks and elsewhere.

## STANDARDS

As a guide for implementation of the Plan's park proposals, specific standards are established for distribution, size, and service radii for neighborhood, community parks and regional parks (See Table 5.1-2).

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**TABLE 5.1-2**  
**PARK STANDARDS FOR NEW FACILITIES**

	Neighborhood Parks	Community Parks	Creekside/ Linear Parks	Bidwell Park <sup>a</sup>
Distribution (acres/1,000 residents)	0.9	1.6	2.5	29.5
Park Size	3 to 4 acres	15 to 50 acres	—	50+
Service Area Radius	0.3 mile	1 to 1.5 miles	—	Entire City

<sup>a</sup> Acres per 1,000 new residents, i.e. for all new developments in the incorporated area and for existing developments that are annexed to the City.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

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These service area standards would ensure that most residents would be within a convenient walking or biking distance of a neighborhood or community park.

### FUTURE NEED AND PARKLAND PROVISION

Need for future neighborhood and community parks in the Planning Area is determined by applying distribution standards to the expected population increase at Plan buildout. Table 5.1-3 summarizes demand for additional parkland that would result.

**TABLE 5.1-3  
PARK ACREAGE NEEDED BASED ON NEW DEVELOPMENT**

	Standard Acres/1,000 Residents	Acres Needed <sup>a</sup>
Neighborhood Parks	0.9	48
Community Parks	1.6	85
Creekside/Linear Parks	2.5	133
Bidwell Park	29.5	1,572
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,838</b>

<sup>a</sup> Based on a population increase of 55,900 in the Planning Area.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

Figure 5-1 shows the names, classifications, and primary service areas of existing and proposed parks and schools. In order to allow flexibility in future site selections, parks are shown with circles corresponding to the desired size. All areas where future parks are shown have at least one vacant site of an appropriate size that could be used for the purpose.

**Neighborhood Parks.** At an average size of 3.3 acres for each park, there would be a need for approximately 15 new neighborhood parks at Plan buildout, as shown on the General Plan Diagram. These are located so as to maximize residents' accessibility to parks.

Opportunities to provide neighborhood parks in many existing neighborhoods are limited because they are built-out. The General Plan Diagram depicts neighborhood parks in areas where sites are available. In other existing neighborhoods that are deficient in parks, pocket- or mini-parks may be appropriate; these are not shown on the Diagram. Where mixed-used

neighborhood cores include parks, the relationship between these and neighborhood park benefit areas must receive further analysis.

**Community Parks.** The community park acreage needed to serve future residents translates to three parks at an average size of 28 acres. One new community park in the Northeast quadrant is shown on the Diagram; in addition, there is a need for one new community park each in the Southwest and the Southeast quadrants.

**Creekside Greenways.** General Plan policies are designed to provide a network of creekside greenways, where feasible, that can be used for walking, jogging, or bicycling, as well as equestrian use, where feasible. The standard for creekside greenways is 2.5 acres per 1,000 residents, which represents a need for an additional 133 acres.

**Bidwell Park.** At 29.5 acres per 1,000 residents, there would be a need for the addition of approximately 1,572 acres to Bidwell Park. Opportunities to expand the Park on level sites or in proximity to urban areas are limited. Because the upper reaches of the park are not in proximity to urban uses, the ecology and character of Lower Bidwell Park are under increasing pressure because of intense use. The General Plan calls for the addition of at least one large "city park" in close proximity to urban uses that would, over time, acquire a character similar to that of Lower Bidwell Park.

### **Guiding Policies: Parks and Recreational Open Space**

- PP-G-1      Develop a diversified, high quality public park system that provides recreation opportunities at a variety of scales for all residents.
- PP-G-2      Use the creeks as a framework for a network of open space.
- PP-G-3      Locate future neighborhood parks closer to where people live, where possible.
- PP-G-4      Continue cooperative efforts with CARD and CUSD to provide recreational facilities.



# Existing and Proposed Parks and Schools

Figure 5-1



- Parks (existing and under development)
- Greenways
- Future Park
- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- .3 mile Neighborhood Park Service Radius
- Schools
- Existing or under development
- Future School

Note: Figure excludes Park and Recreation areas smaller than 2.5 acres in area.

Sources: City of Chico, 1993; CUSD Twenty Year Student Housing Master Plan, 1992; CUSD, Personal communication, 1993; Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan, 1988; CARD, Personal communication, 1993; and Blayney Dyett, 1994.



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- PP-I-8 Expand the Upper Bidwell Park consistent with the 1974 Department of Parks and Recreation study, 1976 General Plan, and as depicted on the General Plan Diagram. Undertake efforts to protect viewsheds, open space, and sensitive resources along the south side of Upper Bidwell Park.
- PP-I-9 As part of the development approval process, establish a network of recreational trails extending from the urban area into the foothills, and preserve public access through new and existing development to enable future use of such trails.
- PP-I-10 Explore the feasibility of developing smaller neighborhood parks, of about two acres, in selected areas where a maintenance district or other funding mechanisms exist and where the development pattern lends itself to such facilities.
- PP-I-11 Use the current opportunity purchase procedures to acquire a neighborhood park site along Little Chico Creek east of Forest Avenue.

#### **Maintenance**

- PP-I-12 Continue to require property owners to waive their right to protest formation of landscape and lighting assessment or other City maintenance districts as a condition of approval of new residential development.
- PP-I-13 Continue to explore other means of providing a stable funding source for park maintenance.

#### **Coordination with CARD**

- PP-I-14 Work with CARD to ensure that policies, standards, and sites for new parks identified as part of the General Plan are incorporated the CARD Plan; promote use of native vegetation and drought-tolerant plantings where feasible and appropriate.
- PP-I-15 Clearly identify the agency responsible for acquisition, development, and operation of neighborhood parks.
- PP-I-16 Continue using the CARD *Park and Recreation Plan* as a vehicle to implement the General Plan and for providing guidelines related to park design and development.
- PP-I-17 Coordinate park planning and improvements with facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel.



*For policies related to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, see Chapter 3: Land Use.*

### **Joint Detention Basin/Park Development**

- PP-I-18      Encourage development of future detention basins for joint stormwater management/park use, where feasible, and require the Engineering Division to consult with the Planning and the Parks divisions and CARD regarding sites for any detention basins and use of stormwater runoff controls built into the landscape, where appropriate.

## **5.2 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

### **SCHOOLS**

The Chico Unified School District (CUSD) serves the City of Chico and surrounding areas. Existing facilities include 16 elementary (K-6) schools (14 within the Planning Area and two outside of the Planning Area), two junior high (7-8) schools, two senior high (9-12) schools, and one continuation high school. The District's long-term plans are detailed in the *Twenty-Year Student Housing Master Plan*, revised most recently in February 1993. The *Master Environmental Assessment* (Section 17) provides detailed information pertaining to existing conditions and the District's plans.

**Current and Projected Enrollment.** Table 5.2-1 summarizes current and projected enrollment by school type in the Planning Area. Estimates of current enrollment indicate that about 13,350 students were enrolled at public schools in the Planning Area. Based on current student generation rates, this would increase by about 9,500 over the Plan period.

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**TABLE 5.2-1**  
**PLANNING AREA SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**  
**1993-1994 AND BUILDOUT\***

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Grade	Estimated 1993-1994 Enrollment	Projected Enrollment at Buildout	Increase in Enrollment
Elementary (K-6)	7,874	13,594	5,720
Junior High (7-8)	1,988	3,337	1,349
High (9-12)	3,489	5,927	2,438
Total	13,351	22,858	9,507

\* Excluding schools in CUSD outside the Planning Area.

Sources: Chico Unified School District (1993-94 enrollment).

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**Need for New Facilities.** At the current grade split, there would be a need to provide six new elementary, one junior high, and one or two high schools at Plan buildout (Table 5.2-2). Facilities currently under development include a new junior high school along Notre Dame Extension, and the Henshaw Elementary School on Henshaw Avenue. Sites for new schools are depicted on the General Plan Diagram with circles to indicate the general locations of proposed sites. In addition, the City has an agreement with developers for reserving a site for a junior high school in the Bidwell Ranch area.

**Funding.** School districts throughout the state are limited to levying a state-determined maximum fee on residential development to mitigate school impacts. While the 1986 act, establishing the fee, expressly prohibits denial of a project based on the adequacy of school facilities, courts have held that prohibitions apply only to adjudicatory actions. The November 1993 defeat of Proposition 170, which would have allowed a simple majority vote on local school bonds, has created further uncertainty about school construction financing, and new funding authority (e.g., a parcel tax) is likely to be proposed to supplement mitigation fees which can be levied for General Plan amendments and zone changes.

**Site Reservations.** The Chico Municipal Code provides authority for the City to require subdividers to reserve land for elementary school sites for a reasonable period of time. Under the Municipal Code, the CUSD would be required to provide funds for the reserved site(s). If the land has been owned by the subdivider for more than 10 years, and facilities are required as part of the CUSD Master Plan, or CUSD requests such reservation, the CUSD has to enter into an agreement to buy the site(s) within 60 days.



**TABLE 5.2-2**  
**PLANNING AREA NEW SCHOOL NEED**

Grade	Excess Capacity at Existing Schools	Students to be Accommodated in new Facilities	Number of New Schools Needed <sup>a</sup>
Elementary (K-6)	1,525	4,195	6
Junior High (7-8)	495	854	1
High (9-12)	45	2,393	1 to 2

<sup>a</sup> Maximum enrollment size:

Elementary School	750 students
Junior High School	1,400 students
High School	1,700 students

Sources: Chico Unified School District and Blayney Dyett, 1994.

### CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO (CSUC)

Located close to downtown on a 130-acre site, CSUC is the second-oldest campus in the state university system. Originally known as the Chico State Normal School, it was established on land provided by John Bidwell in 1887. In Fall 1992, approximately 13,400 students (full-time equivalent or FTE) were enrolled at the campus. The campus combines the ambience of a natural creekside setting with a close-knit grouping of buildings.

The university has had a major impact on the history and character of Chico. It is also the City's largest employer, employing about 1,800 people; many businesses are directly or indirectly dependent on the CSUC. The campus also provides cultural and recreation opportunities to the community. The continued prosperity of downtown and the location of several high-technology companies in the greater Chico area can be directly attributed to the presence of CSUC and of a skilled labor force.

**Facilities and Enrollment.** CSUC was established with a mandate to serve a nine-county area in northern California and remains the northern-most inland campus in the state system; it draws students from all over the state.

As of 1993, the campus has the physical capacity to accommodate a full-time enrollment (FTE) of 14,000. CSUC's future enrollment plans are uncertain at present, and no long-range projections are available.

## BUTTE COLLEGE

Butte College, part of the state community college system, is located along Williams Road (off of Durham-Pentz Road), southeast of the Planning Area. In the Spring 1993 semester, the College had an enrollment of 11,400 students. The College leases a 17,000 square-foot facility at 260 Cohasset Road from the Chico Area Recreation and Park District for classrooms and support offices. Both day and evening classes are conducted at the facility. The College also uses several other facilities in the Planning Area, including schools, gymnasiums, and churches. Total enrollment in the Chico facilities stood at 4,500 in Spring 1993.

Butte College's expansion efforts are also uncertain at present. However the College is interested in the feasibility of a permanent facility for students enrolled in its leased facility at Chico.

## Guiding Policies: Educational Facilities

- PP-G-5 Support efforts by Chico Unified School District (CUSD), CSUC, and Butte College to maintain and improve educational facilities and services.
- PP-G-6 Encourage CUSD to provide educational facilities with sufficient permanent capacity to meet the needs of current and projected enrollment.
- PP-G-7 Cooperate with CUSD and CARD in coordinating joint use of school facilities for community recreation.

## Implementing Policies: Educational Facilities

### Schools

- PP-I-19 Work with CUSD on updating the *Twenty Year Student Housing Master Plan* to be consistent with the General Plan and securing sites for new junior high and high schools.

The General Plan, which has a longer time-horizon than the school district's plan, provides for additional school sites.

- PP-I-20 Require subdividers to reserve school sites as shown on the General Plan Diagram for CUSD acquisition for a reasonable period of time.

- PP-I-21** Support CUSD's efforts to mitigate significant impacts of new projects on school facilities, consistent with State law.

State law limits the fee that can be imposed on residential development to mitigate school impacts and prohibits denial of a project on the basis of the inadequacy of school facilities or school impact fees.

- PP-I-22** Consult with CUSD before considering potential alternative uses for the proposed Junior High School site at Bidwell Ranch.

Current projections indicate that aside from the site under development on Humboldt Road, no other junior high schools would be needed at Plan buildout.

#### **California State University, Chico**

- PP-I-23** Work with CSUC, CUSD, and other agencies to ensure that facilities and sites are available for the CSUC to expand.

This may include:

- Working with the CUSD to explore use of the present Chico High site for CSUC expansion.
- Working with the CSUC to find sites to accommodate administrative needs off-campus to make greater room for academic space at the campus.

Underutilized sites in Downtown in the vicinity of the campus can be made available to CSUC for the purpose. This would also add to the vitality of Downtown.

#### **Butte College**

- PP-I-24** Work with Butte College to explore the feasibility of a permanent Chico facility for education programs.

A site close to Downtown, such as upper Park Street, would serve to increase the importance of Downtown.

### 5.3 WATER SUPPLY AND WASTEWATER SERVICE

For policies related to water quality, see Section 7.3 of the Open Space and Environmental Conservation Element.

#### WATER SUPPLY

**Domestic Water.** Cal Water is the sole water service agency in the Planning Area, providing nearly 19,000 water service connections to customers within the Chico District, of which 13,350 are located within the City of Chico municipal boundaries. Residents not currently supplied by Cal Water obtain their water through private wells. Agricultural water demand is also met through private wells.

Cal Water's Chico system consists of three separate pressure zones, the low, high, and Chico Airport zones. The lower elevations within the Planning Area (approximately 260 feet and lower) fall within the low zone; this zone is not dependent on pumps or any special facilities for delivery.

The sole source of water to the Planning Area is groundwater. Cal Water supplies approximately 7.6 billion gallons of water per year to the Chico area. Sixty deep water wells and five storage tanks capable of storing a total of 1.38 million gallons of water are employed by Cal Water.

Approximately 84 percent of Cal Water's service to the Chico District in 1991 was for residential uses, while the remaining was for industrial, governmental, and miscellaneous uses. Cal Water's supply system has not experienced any deficiencies in the Chico District, although the Chico Municipal Airport has experienced reduced flows due to water contamination which has caused wells at the airport to be taken out of service.

**Agricultural Water.** Agricultural water demand is supplied entirely by private groundwater wells. While water use figures for the Planning Area are not available, for the 211,000 acres of agricultural land in the County, about 790,000 acre feet of water was used in 1989.

The Chico Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) currently has the ability to supply reclaimed water (treated to a secondary level) for the purposes of agricultural irrigation using the M & T canal located adjacent to the WPCP site. The canal currently supplies landowners with irrigation water diverted from Big Chico Creek. As much as 4.5 million gallons per day (mgd) of reclaimed water could be made available for such uses during the agricultural irrigation season (April - October), freeing Big Chico Creek water for domestic purposes.



Affected landowners have declined the offer of reclaimed water for agricultural purposes in the past, and continue to use their Big Chico Creek water rights.

### **WASTEWATER SERVICE**

The WPCP, located at Chico River Road southwest of the City, is owned and operated by the City. The gravity-flow system consists of collection, conveyance, treatment, and disposal facilities with ultimate discharge of treated effluent into the Sacramento River, approximately 1.7 miles from the treatment plant site.

**Service Area.** The WPCP serves development both within and without the City limits. The City recently adopted policies to expand the wastewater service area to include nearly the entire Sphere of Influence. Development within the expanded service area is planned to be connected to the WPCP through mechanisms described in the City's *Sanitary Sewer Master Plan*.

**Capacity.** The WPCP has an existing capacity of 6 mgd, and operates with current average flows of approximately 5.5 mgd. A population of approximately 55,000 is currently served by the WPCP, with average per capita sewage generation of 93 gpd. The WPCP's ultimate design capacity is 16 mgd, which could serve a future population of 160,000.

### **Guiding Policies: Water Supply and Wastewater Service**

- PP-G-8 Promote orderly and efficient expansion of public utilities to meet projected needs.
- PP-G-9 Encourage water conservation with incentives for decreased water use and active public education programs.
- PP-G-10 Coordinate capital improvements planning for all municipal service infrastructure with the direction, extent, and timing of growth.
- PP-G-11 Establish equitable methods for distributing costs associated with providing water and wastewater service to development, including impact mitigation fees where warranted.

*See also Section 5.6, Resource-based Thresholds.*

## **Implementing Policies: Water Supply and Wastewater Service**

### **Extension of Services**

- PP-I-25 In unincorporated areas, require annexation to the City as a condition of extending City services.

### **Water Supply and Distribution**

- PP-I-26 Explore ways to encourage use of reclaimed water for irrigation purposes.

Because of availability of an adequate supply of water in the past, the urgency of finding alternative sources has not been great. The Butte Basin Water Users Association study, presently underway, will provide a better understanding of the safe yield level of groundwater.

- PP-I-27 Explore the feasibility of using reclaimed water for irrigation of residential landscaping in new subdivisions and landscaping at public facilities, including any new golf courses.

Residences also may be retrofitted for use of reclaimed water for landscaping with approval of the State Department of Health Services under recent legislation.<sup>2</sup>

- PP-I-28 Support regional programs, such as those proposed by Butte Basin Water Users Association, to protect valuable groundwater resources.

- PP-I-29 In cooperation with the Butte Basin Water Users Association or similar organizations, establish limits of groundwater withdrawal that allow for sustainable levels of growth without taxing water resources or creating the potential for subsidence. Groundwater withdrawal shall be analyzed during the five-year review of the General Plan.

*See related Open Space and Conservation Element policies in Chapter 7.*

- PP-I-30 Undertake an analysis of the projected availability of groundwater to serve Plan buildout when the Butte Basin Groundwater Model is completed and available for the City's use. The City will establish a water supply budget and define the

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<sup>2</sup>

Chapter 980, Statutes of 1993; see California Plumbing Code, Appendix J: Graywater Systems for Single Family Dwelling, (Title 25, Part 5, California Administration Code).

specific measures that need to be implemented to assure sustainable levels of groundwater quality and quantity.

### **Water Conservation**

- PP-I-31 Establish guidelines and standards for water conservation and actively promote use of water-conserving devices and practices in both new construction and major alterations and additions to existing buildings.
- PP-I-32 Develop a list of water conservation measures to be imposed on projects in the event that groundwater availability drops below acceptable levels, as will be established by the City of Chico after review of the outcome from the Butte Basin Groundwater model. These conservation measures may range from buy-back incentive programs to more stringent water metering requirements.

### **Wastewater Service**

- PP-I-33 Ensure that sufficient wastewater treatment capacity is available to serve anticipated growth.

## **5.4 STORM DRAINAGE**

Storm drainage management in the Planning Area is provided by several collection systems operated and maintained by both the City and the County. The City has no designated storm drainage service area, although facilities are required of proposed development when necessary. The unincorporated area has been divided into several County Service Areas (CSAs) to facilitate the provision and funding of necessary drainage facilities.

**Facilities and Capacities.** The storm drainage system consists of conventional drop inlet storm drainage pipeline collection and conveyance systems located along the major creeks that traverse the Planning Area. Big Chico, Sycamore, and Mud creeks and Lindo Channel receive peak flows about 24 hours after peak storm flows, while peak flows in Little Chico and Comanche creeks are more immediate.

Many of the channels in the Planning Area have become overgrown with vegetation where they traverse private property, or have been rerouted or filled where they cross farmlands west of Chico, resulting in a reduced carrying capacity and increased flood potential. Portions of the Planning Area are not served by any improved storm drainage collection system, although in some cases, roadside ditches, widely-spaced drop inlets, and pipe inlets help to control runoff.

Urban development in the Planning Area has resulted in the conversion of natural drainage areas and runoff control channels to impermeable surfaces. Also, the installation of new pipes to collect and control additional runoff from new development further concentrates runoff in downstream areas. Drainage dry wells have been constructed to collect this new downstream drainage for percolation into the ground, however maintenance problems and nitrate infiltration to groundwater sources have developed.

**Planned Improvements.** The City is preparing an overall Storm Water Management Plan to assist with the future storm water requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act. Based on the findings of the study, the City will develop a storm water management program which will identify appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address water quality problems and regulatory requirements. The City is also considering the establishment of an area-wide utility and rate structure to fund all elements of the storm water management plan — planning, design, construction, implementation, and ongoing maintenance.

The General Plan encourages use of natural drainage techniques and provides policies to ensure provision of adequate drainage facilities. The three-pronged strategy governing the policies that follow includes:

- ▶ Use of natural drainage and reduced storm water flow techniques where feasible;
- ▶ Incorporation of storm-water detention facilities for projects draining into Little Chico and Comanche creeks; and
- ▶ Provision of filtration system for all drainages in the Planning Area.

### **Guiding Policies: Storm Drainage**

- PP-G-12 Develop a comprehensive storm drainage plan that includes alternative storm control features, and use of detention and retention basins.
- PP-G-13 Undertake efforts to minimize storm water runoff.
- PP-G-14 Establish equitable methods of paying for future storm drainage improvements.



### **Implementing Policies: Storm Drainage**

- PP-I-34 Continue exploring alternatives to stormwater collection methods, including the use of detention/retention basins and the feasibility of a "no net runoff" concept for the entire urban area.
- PP-I-35 Use porous materials (e.g. porous asphalt, modular paving, gravel, lattice concrete blocks and porous bricks) for outdoor spaces, paving, and sidewalks, where feasible.
- PP-I-36 Establish storm-water run-off reduction standards for projects larger than five acres and incentives for "zero-net" stormwater runoff, such as reduced storm drainage impact fees.
- PP-I-37 Delineate urban areas draining to Little Chico and Comanche creeks, and require storm-water detention for all projects draining to these creeks. Require no net increase in peak stormwater runoff.
- PP-I-38 Explore the feasibility of an area-wide rate structure to fund storm water drainage and ongoing maintenance. Require all new development to pay this fee as a condition of project approval.
- PP-I-39 Ensure that new development has a minimal impact on natural drainage channels and flow capacity.
- PP-I-40 Continue requiring project proponents to provide plans for erosion and sedimentation control from their sites during construction.
- PP-I-41 Undertake maintenance efforts, in cooperation with the County, to ensure that channels that convey surface drainage are not blocked.

## **5.5 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Policies related to law enforcement and fire protection are in Chapter 8: Safety and Safety Services.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Within the Planning Area there is a full range of health services and facilities, including general and acute care hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, nursing and convalescent facilities, and emergency care centers. The 1989 *California State Health Plan* indicates that there was an adequate supply of physicians, dentists, optometrists, and pharmacists in Butte County in 1988; however, local hospital administrators indicate that access to primary and critical health care services in Chico is presently a problem that might be expected to worsen due to the existing reimbursement system.

A full range of health services is offered at the three major health facilities in Chico — Enloe Memorial Hospital, Chico Community Hospital, and North Valley Rehabilitation Hospital — with the number of current licensed beds totaling nearly 400. Seven skilled nursing facilities have over 500 licensed beds. The 1989 *California State Health Plan* has identified specific bed needs through the year 2000, and has indicated that Chico is likely to have a shortage of beds in all categories, with particular needs for skilled nursing beds.

An application for approval of a new hospital facility by Enloe Hospital in the area near Bruce and Humbolt roads has won approval from the Planning Commission and is currently before the City Council. The planned development includes a 58-bed facility.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE

Currently ambulance service is provided privately by area hospitals. The City Fire Department provides first response service and has achieved minimum EMTI certification for all fire fighters.

## CHILD CARE

The availability of affordable, quality child care is of ongoing concern to working parents, and the lack of such facilities has prompted media attention and identification of a “crisis” in child care. The rising tide of awareness led to the passage of the federal family leave bill that enables new parents working for large employers to spend more time at home with infants. In addition to the stresses that are placed on families, unresolved child care problems may affect the business community in subtle ways, such as frequent phone calls home, tardiness, absenteeism, and poor concentration by employees.

Some California employers sponsor on-site child-care centers, consortium centers where several organizations together sponsor a child-care center, referral services designed specifically to assist employees in locating child-care facilities, and flexible benefits to accommodate employee schedules, including the possibility of telecommuting. Some of these

options also contribute to decreased traffic and improved air quality, since total vehicle miles traveled are minimized by planning for child care sites in proximity to work sites.

**Child-care facilities in Chico.** The Planning Area contains a number of day-care centers and family day-care homes. In early 1993, the licensed capacity of these facilities totaled 1,954 spaces available to children ages two through twelve, which represented an ability to serve about 18 percent of the population in this age group.

### **LIBRARY FACILITIES**

The Chico branch of the Butte County Library, located at 1108 Sherman Avenue, is the only public library in the City. While the physical facilities are adequate for current use, the staffing level, currency of the collection, and subject depth are not perceived to be adequate. If population growth continues at the present rate, County staff estimates that the library building would be inadequate in a decade or so. There is room for expansion at the present site. The General Plan recognizes the need to maintain library services at current levels and expand where possible.

### **Guiding Policies: Community Services**

- PP-G-15 Support efforts to improve and expand health and social services for all segments of the community.
- PP-G-16 Encourage development of adequate, affordable, and quality child care.
- PP-G-17 Support the principle of parental choice for child care and the need for a variety of options available in the community, including schools, child-care centers, family day-care homes, employment sites, and child-care centers along or near transit routes.

### **Implementing Policies: Community Services**

- PP-I-42 Encourage developers of major non-residential projects to provide facilities for child care, or, in appropriate circumstances, provide subsidies for construction and operation of off-site child-care. Incentives that could be offered include a reduction in Street Improvement Impact Fees or increased Floor Area Ratio.
- PP-I-43 Ensure accessibility for disabled persons to all buildings offering health and social services, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

- PP-I-44 Encourage development of multi-purpose health and social service centers in neighborhood mixed-use centers.
- PP-I-45 Continue to support and expand child care provided to families with low incomes; encourage major employers to establish referral services for child-care programs and to adopt flexible schedule to accommodate employees' child-care needs; and support local child-care information and referral services.
- PP-I-46 Coordinate with all emergency medical service providers for the dispersal of such services in order to reduce response time.
- PP-I-47 Continue to assist health-care providers to maintain full range of health-care facilities and services designed to meet regional and community needs.
- PP-I-48 Develop a city library system or work with Butte County to expand its existing library facilities to maintain library services at existing levels. Work with LAFCO and Butte County to explore the feasibility of establishing community-wide funding for library facilities and services.
- PP-I-49 Require new development to pay its fair share of the costs of expanding library services to maintain current service levels.

## **5.6 RESOURCE-BASED THRESHOLDS**

This section establishes policies linking growth to resource-based service standards. The intent is not to limit growth, but to ensure that growth is linked to carrying capacity of public services and that an adequate standard of services is maintained. The resource-based standards and policies are designed to ensure that:

- Resource-based review of impact on public service is integrated as part of the development review process;
- Where new development impacts a public service or facility, this impact is fully mitigated;
- Development is not permitted if performance standards cannot be adequately met; and
- Mitigation of impacts is equitable and is related to the actual impacts.



### **Guiding Policies: Resource-based Thresholds**

- PP-G-18     Establish and maintain standards for public services and facilities to ensure that service demands of new development do not exceed the capacities of streets, utilities, and other public services.
- PP-G-19     Require new development to pay for mitigating impacts on existing public services and facilities to maintain service levels.

### **Implementing Policies: Resource-based Thresholds**

- PP-I-50     Use resource-based standards for transportation facilities, parks, water, wastewater, and drainage facilities and police and fire service established in Table 5.6-1 as a basis for decision on applications for major development projects.
- PP-I-51     Continue to require that new development pay its fair share of costs associated with providing streets and facilities for police and fire protection, parks, wastewater treatment, and drainage.
- PP-I-52     Adopt an “adequate public facilities” ordinance establishing a procedure for reviewing major development applications and requiring a determination as a condition of development approval that:
- Adequate public facilities, as stipulated in Table 5.6-1, would be available at the time of project occupancy and performance standards maintained following project occupancy; or
  - Funding for required improvements is assured and these improvements would be completed within a stipulated time of project occupancy.

**TABLE 5.6-1**  
**RESOURCE-BASED STANDARDS AND REVIEW CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES/SERVICES**

Service	Performance Standard	Threshold for Detailed Study <sup>a</sup>	Development Approved Only If
<b>Transportation</b>	Level of Service Standards specified in Section 3.3 for traffic service.	Over 75 peak-hour vehicle trips. <i>(This translates to approximately 50,000 s.f. of office space, 15,000 s.f. of retail space or 125 housing units).</i>	Approval will not result in violation of adopted standards at any signalized intersection.
<b>Parks</b>	Neighborhood Parks: 0.9 ac./1,000 residents Community Parks: 1.6 ac./1,000 residents Creekside Greenway/Linear Parks: 2.5 ac./1000 residents Bidwell Park: 29.5 ac./1,000 residents	All residential projects where on-site facilities are proposed; otherwise no detailed study required.	Dedications and/or in lieu fees meet the standards and substitution of private recreation facilities for development park fees or parkland dedication is minimized.
<b>Storm Drainage</b>	No net increase in peak storm-water run-off.	All projects in Little Chico Creek and Comanche Creek drainage; projects over 2 acres in other drainages.	Project design incorporates run-off reduction standards, and payment of fee proportionate to run-off.
<b>Schools</b>	As determined by CUSD.	Detailed study not required.	Payment of state-determined maximum fee.
<b>Water Supply</b>	Adequate supply to serve new projects without adverse effects on groundwater levels.	Residential developments over 10 units; Commercial and Industrial developments over 2 acres.	Adequate water supply is available based on basin-wide studies (if model available) and project design includes water conservation measures.
<b>Fire</b>	Within four minutes response time.	Detailed study not required, unless more than 1.5 miles from a fire station.	Sprinklers, fire-retardant materials and other requirements as specified by the City Fire Department incorporated into project design.
<b>Police</b>	Within average minimum response time.	Detailed study not required unless outside current service area.	Adequate police service available.
<b>Wastewater</b>	Capacity to treat wastewater available.	Detailed study not required.	Adequate capacity or other mitigation available.

<sup>a</sup> All projects (above or within the threshold) will be required to pay fees to mitigate impacts associated with the project.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.







## 6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Element establishes policies to maintain and enhance economic development opportunities within the City and to define a long-term framework for sustainability. The specific focus of this Element is on how the City can direct local resources to retain and assist local businesses and attract new industry that will increase the City's tax base and support efforts to strengthen and diversify the local economy.

If Chico is to sustain its community character, new economic development must be sensitive to the environment and compatible with existing and planned land uses. Additionally, Chico is the center of retail commercial activity and services for the Tri-County area with substantial employment (see Figure 6-1); maintaining this regional status is essential for the economic vitality of the City.

The General Plan Diagram shows sites for commercial and industrial development at appropriate locations within the Planning Area. Some of these are environmentally constrained, so site development costs will be higher than development at unconstrained alternative locations. One of the purposes of the Economic Development Element is to ensure that additional costs are not imposed on new development because of unnecessary governmental constraints. In this context, the City will be acting as a "development partner", facilitating the approval process while still ensuring that environmental resources are protected, consistent with the General Plan.

Sites that are not already annexed require consent of property owners and environmental review under CEQA as well as approval of the annexation by the Butte County LAFCO before the City can consider a development application. This prolongs the risk and the costs measured both in time and in dollars for businesses seeking sites in the City. Reduction of the time and the effort involved for individual project proponents would go a long way towards increasing Chico's attractiveness to potential businesses. If infrastructure and services were available, that would be an added benefit, but first priority should be to annex potentially developable industrial sites.

To sustain its ability to provide public services for existing and future residents and fund programs for environmental protection, the City will need to enhance its revenue base through new retail, commercial, office, and industrial development. Concurrently the City must also help local businesses grow and provide employment for existing and future residents. A healthy, vital community can be sustained with a diverse economy offering useful and satisfying work for Chico residents.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

The Economic Development Element is an optional element of the General Plan under the Government Code of the State of California which states: "the general plan may include any other elements or address any other subjects which, in the judgment of the legislative body, relate to the physical development of the county or city."

### **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

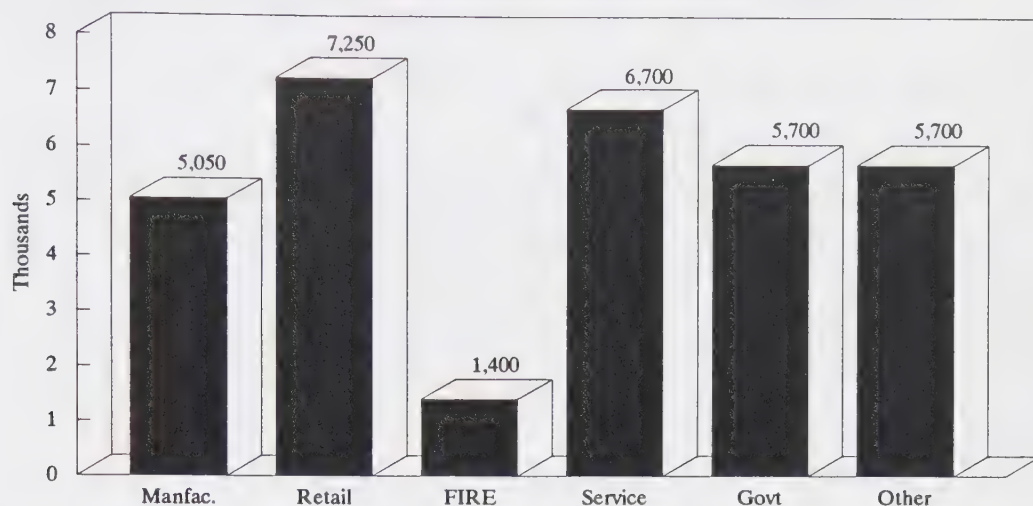
The Land Use Element establishes the physical framework for development, and addresses the jobs/housing balance, while the Transportation Element provides for circulation system improvements that will serve new development. The Transportation Element also includes policies for the Municipal Airport, goods movement and railroads. Finally, the Housing Element includes policies and programs for affordable housing, which will also help economic development.

### **RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Detailed background information relating to economic development is presented in the *Master Environmental Assessment* in following sections:

- 2      Population and Economic Growth,
- 3.2    Existing Development Pattern and Land Use, and
- 3.4    Current Development Trends.

**FIGURE 6-1: PLANNING AREA, ESTIMATED JOBS BY INDUSTRY**

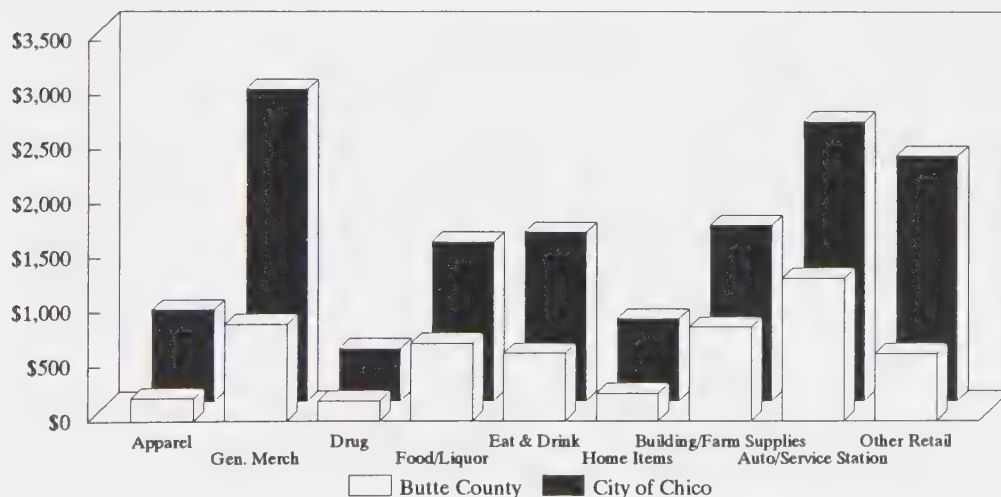


FIRE: Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Other: Fisheries, Forestry, Agriculture, Construction, Mining, Transportation, and Utilities, each representing less than three percent of Planning Area jobs.

Sources: California Employment Development Department; 1990 U.S. Census; and, Chico Chamber of Commerce.

**FIGURE 6-2: 1991 PER CAPITA TAXABLE RETAIL SALES, CITY OF CHICO AND BUTTE COUNTY**



Sources: California State Board of Equalization; and, California Department of Finance

## **6.1 BACKGROUND**

Chico's economy is quite diversified. The largest numbers of jobs are in sectors that have seen recent growth and have good long-range growth prospects. Services and retail trade are the two largest sectors of employment, together accounting for an estimated one-half (47 percent) of the jobs in the Planning Area. Government and education (19 percent) and manufacturing (17 percent) are the next largest sectors. As of 1990, the local labor force included 38,750 residents, and the number of jobs per employed resident assuming a 7.5 percent unemployment rate, was 0.91. Further information on the estimated number of jobs in the City and employment trends by sector and firm size is in the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

## **6.2 REGIONAL INFLUENCES ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

Regional and inter-regional influences are playing an increasingly influential role in economic growth and structural changes in employment composition occurring in Chico and elsewhere in the Central Valley. In the Valley as a whole, employment in production sectors, such as manufacturing, has been growing more slowly than employment in population-serving sectors such as retail, services, and finance, insurance and real estate. Growth in service sectors in the Central Valley has been strong, even compared to growth in other parts of California and had a marked influence on the labor market of larger Valley cities, such as Sacramento, in the 1980s.

The value of agricultural production, in constant 1993 dollars, in Northern Sacramento Valley (which includes Butte County) climbed up during 1973-81 but has since dropped to about 1965 levels. Harvest bearing acreage has declined, with switching from low-value crops like pasture and field crops to high value ones such as fruits, vegetables and nuts. While the proceeds from sales of agricultural products are increasing, the cash value of crops produced in the County, expressed in constant dollars, decreased by about 12 percent between 1987 and 1991; the value of fruit and nut crops decreased by about 11 percent. Prices generally have continued to decline since 1991, although nut prices have been strong the last two seasons.

The potential for economic growth in the Planning Area is enhanced by the presence of a skilled workforce, available labor supply, and education and job training opportunities available through California State University, Chico and Butte College. The availability of health, cultural and recreational amenities in the region are also Chico's strong suits. Nationally and in Chico, the greatest job gains are likely to come through expansion in the service sector. Chico also may benefit from economic expansion under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the recently completed world trade and tariff negotiations. Potential for expansion of wholesale trade is limited because of the City's distance from Interstate 5. If other centers of retail activity emerge elsewhere in the region, growth in the retail trade



sector in Chico and the County could be threatened, though this seems unlikely in the near future.

### 6.3 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH PROSPECTS

The wage and cost of living disparity between the coastal and Valley areas, and the availability of labor and land, is likely to continue providing impetus to continued job and population growth in Butte County and in Chico. Studies conducted for the Institute of Business and Economic Research at the University of California, Berkeley, indicate that despite the growth in non-agricultural employment and decline in agricultural employment, the income differential between Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area and other coastal counties widened, both in relative as well in absolute terms, rather than narrowed in the past decade. If this trend continues, Chico should be able to attract new business because land cost are also lower than in the Bay Area and other coastal counties. However, these same studies also have determined that the effects of the coastal economy spillover on the Central Valley are limited primarily to the Southern Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin County. This is largely because of already existing economic diversity and proximity to major urban centers.

**Projected Job Growth.** Compared to the state as a whole, job growth prospects in the Chico area continue to be good. State and federal projection of job growth on the Chico urban area show that continued growth can be expected in the retail and services sectors, which have been the dominant sources of recent growth (Table 6.3-1). Some gains in manufacturing and relocation of manufacturing industries from outside the area can also be expected, though gains due to relocation are likely to be modest in comparison to the overall population growth.

**Retailing.** Chico has long been the center of retailing in the Tri County area. This has led the growth of retail activity in all sectors and, in recent years, regional malls and major discount stores have opened to serve the growing population. Per capita retail sales are substantially higher in the City than average per capita sales in the County (see Figure 6-2 and Table 6.3-2.).

**TABLE 6.3-1**  
**CHICO METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA PROJECTED JOB GROWTH 1990-1997 AND**  
**1990-2020**

Industry	Percent Increase in Jobs	
	1990-1997 <sup>a</sup>	1990 2020 <sup>b</sup>
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	3.1	0.2
Construction and Mining	4.3	5.2
Manufacturing	5.4	4.6
Transportation and Public Utilities	3.7	2.7
Wholesale Trade	1.1	-0.2
Retail Trade	21.3	21.2
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	5.1	14.0
Services	43.8	49.4
Government and Education	12.2	2.9

<sup>a</sup> California Employment Development Department, 1992.

<sup>b</sup> U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 1992.

Source: Blayney Dyett, 1994.

Looking ahead to the year 2020, sales for convenience goods and restaurants, and highway-oriented and specialty stores are likely to grow in proportion to Planning Area population growth and increases in personal income (see Table 6.3-2). Growth in department store sales and wholesale or discount store sales also is expected, but long-term prospects will depend on Chico's ability to maintain a regional competitive advantage and the unknown effect that home shopping with computers and mail-order business will have on local retail sales.<sup>1</sup>

**Visitor serving Facilities.** In Chico, visitor-serving facilities are an important component of the local economy. They serve academic, professional and trade organizations, and conventions and visitors drawn to the community by CSUC and Butte College. Although there are a wide range of facilities available in the community for meetings and banquets, the City does not have a convention or community center or a substantial number of hotel rooms adjacent to CSUC and Downtown. The General Plan Land Use Diagram designates sites for visitor-serving facilities to encourage development in this sector.

<sup>1</sup> On a national scale, consumer and business mail order sales decreased from 4 percent of total U.S. retail sales in 1982 to 3.5 percent in 1991, suggesting that this factor will not have a significant effect on retail space needs over the long-term unless home computer use becomes far more wide spread.

**TABLE 6.3-2**  
**PLANNING AREA PROJECTED RETAIL SALES AND SPACE NEEDS**  
(1991 Dollars in thousands; space in square feet)

Retail Category	1991 Taxable Retail Sales		Chico Share of County	Projected Sales at Buildout	Net Change 1991 to Buildout	Additional Space Needed
Planning Area	Butte County					
<b>Convenience Goods + Restaurants</b>						
Drug	22,921	34,224	0.67	37,831	14,910	90,361
Food	71,727	124,810	0.57	118,384	46,656	266,608
Packaged Liquor	6,832	8,658	0.79	11,275	4,444	20,199
Eating and Drinking	75,794	116,167	0.65	125,096	49,302	197,208
<b>Total</b>	<b>177,274</b>	<b>283,859</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>292,586</b>	<b>115,312</b>	<b>574,377</b>
<b>Comparison Goods</b>						
Apparel	36,032	40,078	0.90	52,237	16,205	98,213
General Merchandise	121,981	165,808	0.74	176,841	54,860	332,482
Home Furnishing and Appliances	36,393	47,791	0.76	52,760	16,367	99,196
<b>Total</b>	<b>194,407</b>	<b>253,677</b>	<b>0.77</b>	<b>281,839</b>	<b>87,432</b>	<b>529,891</b>
<b>Highway Oriented</b>						
Building Material and Farm Supplies	103,315	161,272	0.64	170,518	67,203	516,948
Auto Dealers and Auto Supplies	107,961	180,025	0.60	178,187	70,226	390,143
Service Stations	34,295	65,100	0.53	56,602	22,308	148,718
<b>Total</b>	<b>245,570</b>	<b>406,397</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>405,307</b>	<b>159,737</b>	<b>1,055,809</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>93,196</b>	<b>115,748</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>153,817</b>	<b>60,621</b>	<b>404,143</b>
<b>Total Retail</b>	<b>710,447</b>	<b>1,059,681</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>1,133,549</b>	<b>423,102</b>	<b>2,564,220</b>

Notes:

- 1 Unincorporated Planning Area 1991 sales estimated in proportion to unincorporated County population.
- 2 Projections for comparison goods assume that Plan buildout would occur in 2012.

Sources: California Board of Equalization; and Blayney Dyett

## 6.4 DEFINING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A viable economic development strategy is proactive; it anticipates and responds to future growth prospects. Besides ensuring that adequate sites are available for future commercial and industrial development at appropriate locations, the City needs to take a comprehensive look at all aspects of the local economy. The broader policy issue is how involved the City should be in economic development; should this include planning and technical assistance or direct financial assistance? The strategy outlined in this element includes a number of specific programs as well as policies intended to improve the overall business climate and establish positive working relations with the private sector. This strategy is intended to protect and enhance existing business, develop higher education links with CSUC and Butte College, target environmentally-sensitive, future-oriented industries, and improve those aspects of the community that support and enhance the City's image.<sup>2</sup>

## 6.5 POLICIES

For policies related to commercial, office, industrial, and research and development facilities, see Chapter 3: Land Use Element.

### Guiding Policies: Economic Development

- ED-G-1 Maintain a balanced land use program that provides opportunities for commercial and industrial development, dispersed throughout the community and at appropriate locations within the urban area served by adequate infrastructure.

The General Plan Diagram also recognizes that industrial users have a broad range of needs, and so provides for more land than may be needed over the planning period to allow for a choice of sites.

- ED-G-2 Actively promote economic development opportunities and knowledge of Chico in the region, state and nation; maintain a positive, small-business climate, and strengthen the City's tax base by encouraging environmentally sensitive development with tax generation potential.

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on success stories in other communities, see Business Opportunities Casebook, *A Rural Revitalization Program for Community*, published by the U.S. Small Business Administration.



- ED-G-3 Build long-term partnerships between the City and businesses, business organizations, and the educational, arts and environmental communities.
- ED-G-4 Promote economic development activities that link residents with businesses in the City, such as job training and job development and facilitates jobs/housing balance.
- For further discussion of jobs/housing balance, see Section 3.12 in the Land Use Element.*
- ED-G-5 Encourage agricultural processing and cooperative distribution and marketing of agricultural products grown locally.
- ED-G-6 Promote high technology and research and development activities.
- ED-G-7 Enhance aspects of the community that help economic development and draw residents to Chico, including small-town ambience, educational, cultural, environmental and recreational resources, and affordable housing.
- ED-G-8 Encourage large businesses in Chico to make purchases in the community whenever possible to support local firms

## **Implementing Policies: Economic Development**

### **Coordination and Procedures**

- ED-I-1 Continue to have an Economic Development Coordinator on City staff with responsibility for promoting economic development opportunities and assisting new businesses in site selection, recruitment, training and relocation. The City should, when feasible, help groups of businesses undertake common promotional efforts and provide information on publicly funded revitalization or redevelopment efforts and state and federal loan programs.
- ED-I-2 Continue to identify, pursue and capture state, federal and other grants on a sustained basis.
- ED-I-3 Establish guidelines which link business activity revenues to the City's economic development program costs and determine the range of reasonable support costs for future economic development programs which the City may fund.

- ED-I-4      Establish bi-annual priorities between capital projects and economic development projects within the context of the City's Capital Improvement Program; consider expanding the CIP to include Economic Development and Revitalization Programs to be coordinated with the Redevelopment Agency's programs.

**Programs**

- ED-I-5      Continue to support a coordinated approach to working with key industries for the purposes of targeted marketing (on a case-by-case basis) to existing firms to be retained and new firms to be sought. Identify underrepresented industries that may be attracted to Chico and actively try to recruit them.

Candidates include businesses involved with health services, tourism, professional services, agricultural services, computer software and services, organic agriculture and specialty foods.

- ED-I-6      Explore the feasibility of promoting resident job hiring and job training on all public works projects and projects receiving financial assistance from the City, including the Redevelopment Agency.
- ED-I-7      Develop an incentive program for key industries, providing limited financial incentives for business expansion or relocation in target areas, with maximum public and market exposure.
- ED-I-8      Assist local merchants and business organizations interested in forming business improvement districts to promote a definable identity for specific commercial areas through coordinated signage, landscaping and entry/identity symbols.
- ED-I-9      Investigate the feasibility of having the Redevelopment Agency provide low-interest loans for small businesses now located in Chico who want to relocate or expand within the urban area.
- ED-I-10     Work with EDD, CSUC and Butte College to establish practical job training and vocational education programs geared to specific industries and occupational needs. Examples may include the visitor industry, specific agricultural commodities, and high technology manufacturing.
- ED-I-11     Continue to support a local jobs program to link business with residents.
- ED-I-12     Establish a program, such as "Oregon Marketplace," to connect local business needs with local products and services.

ED-I-13 Investigate the feasibility of establishing a Foreign Trade Zone in the Chico Urban area.

ED-I-14 Assist the Farmer's Market by continuing to provide sites for market operations.

### **Cultural Amenities, Image and Business Climate**

ED-I-15 Continue to promote cultural amenities and facilitate special events in the community that will draw visitors to the community. Such events have included: the Chico Artisans Fair, Shakespeare in the Park, regional sporting events and other seasonal events that will attract visitors to the community.

ED-I-16 Work with local hotels and motels, bed & breakfast operators, the Chamber of Commerce, and recreational organizations and business to promote a Chico "weekend package" of emphasizing the community's historical and cultural assets, educational facilities and recreational areas.

ED-I-17 Explore the feasibility of establishing a convention center or performing arts center, either Downtown or in another accessible location.

### **Commercial and Industrial Development**

*See also policies in Chapter 3: Land Use Element.*

ED-I-18 Maintain a generous supply of "ready to go" industrial land by annexing and zoning sites prior to receipt of development applications.

ED-I-19 Develop guidelines for adaptive reuse of commercial/industrial buildings and "incubator" development projects, including "live/work" studios.

### **Fees and Development Standards**

ED-I-20 Review current development standards and project mitigation fees and modify them, as appropriate, to encourage reinvestment and intensification of use of land and structures within the existing urban area.

ED-I-21 Explore financing plans for existing businesses seeking to expand in Chico for whom payment of fees "upfront" may represent a major financial burden. Six- or twelve-month financing programs could be considered.

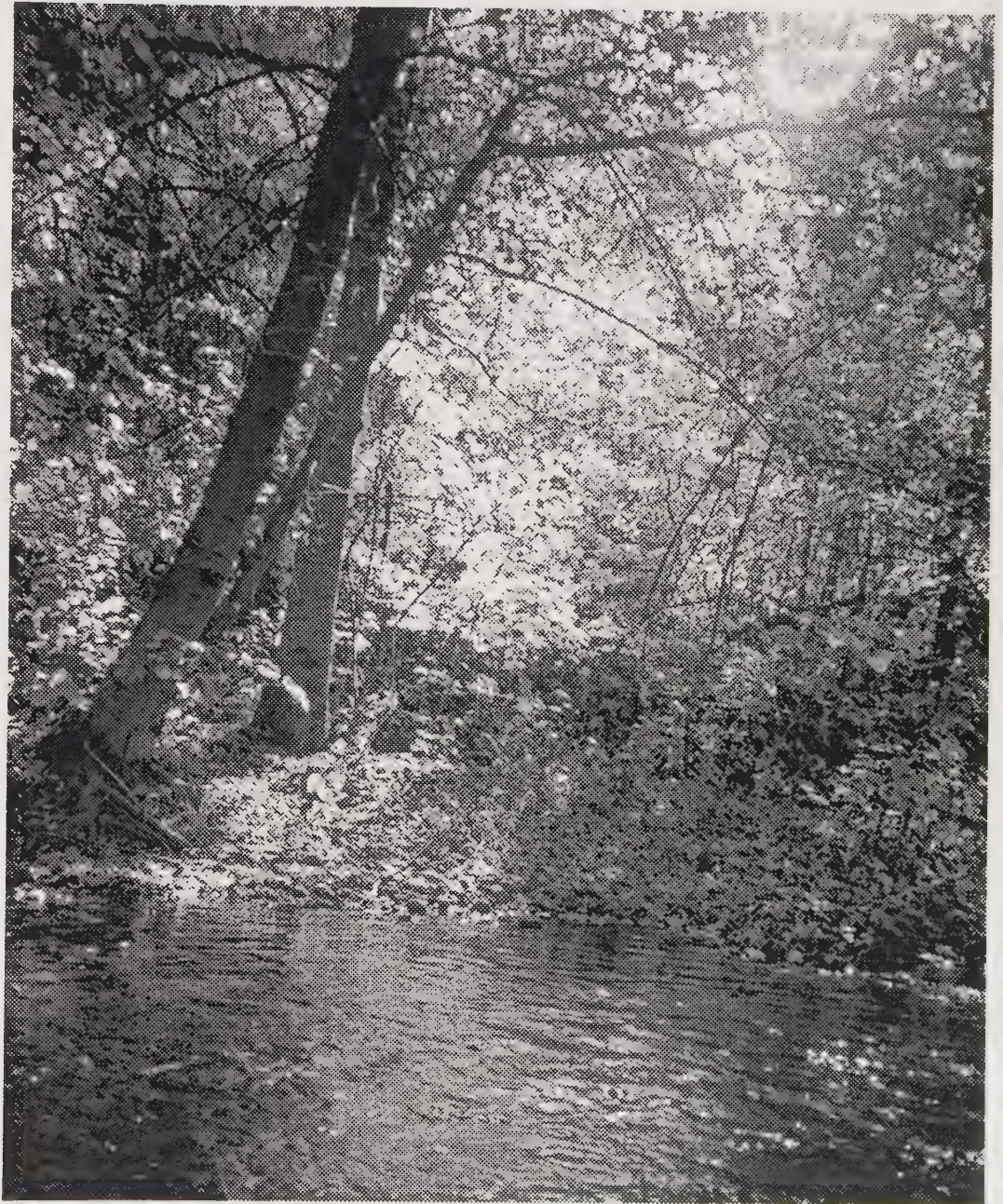
ED-I-22 Provide incentives to attract and encourage environmentally desirable businesses

and business activities, including possibly reduced fees for outstanding environmental conservation efforts.



# PART III

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT











## **7 OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

A major goal of this General Plan is to preserve and enhance the natural environment and ensure that long-term growth does not adversely affect environmental resources. The General Plan Diagram identifies areas proposed for open space uses, including Open Space for Environment Conservation/Safety and Open Space for Agriculture and Resource Management. These land use classifications are discussed in the Land Use Element. In this Element of the General Plan, policies for open space lands and for conservation of natural resources within the Planning Area are presented.

In addition to the General Plan Diagram, several figures depict natural resources in the Planning Area and thus function as an inventory of open space lands, as required by state law. Additional information on existing natural resources is in the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

### **7.1 AIR QUALITY**

Air is a critical environmental resource that must be protected. Chico enjoys fairly good air quality in relation to other comparable-sized urban areas in the central valley; however, without conscious efforts to achieve and maintain air quality standards, threats to public health may result. Commercial and industrial facilities that violate state and federal standards are subject to specific penalties. The City may also be subject to penalties unless it cooperates with other public agencies in efforts to meet standards.

In the Planning Area, degradation of air quality is caused, in part, by local topographic and meteorological conditions but, more importantly, by emissions of pollutants from motor vehicles and commercial and industrial development. Wood-burning stoves and agricultural activities also affect air quality. The policies in this section of the General Plan, along with land use and transportation policies in chapters 3 and 4, seek continued maintenance of the high quality of air enjoyed by the residents.

## RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW

**Conservation Element.** - The purpose of the Conservation Element is to assure the conservation, development and use of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals and other natural resources.

**Open Space Element.** The purpose of the Open Space Element is to assure the continued availability of land for the managed production of resources (such as food and fiber), to protect the enjoyment of scenic beauty and ensure provision of recreation, to identify and preserve lands whose indiscriminate development could compromise public health and safety, and to preserve natural resources.

**Open Space Action Program.** The Government Code requires that the Open Space Element contain an action program consisting of specific programs the City intends to pursue in implementing its open space plan. Chico's open space action plan for the City of Chico is the sum total of the open space and conservation policies in this Chapter of the General Plan and the open space proposals depicted on the General Plan Land Use Diagram.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Open space for outdoor recreation is discussed in the Land Use Element and the Parks and Public Facilities Element, as is water supply and conservation. Policies concerning open space for public health and safety are in the Safety Element. Preservation of historic resources and landmarks is addressed in the Community Design Element as are policies related to compact urban form.

## RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This Element builds on an inventory and analysis of natural resources, presented in the following sections of the *Master Environmental Assessment*:

- 6 Biological Resources
- 7 Air Quality
- 8 Cultural Resources
- 9 Water Resources
- 10 Earth Resources

## CONTEXT

The Planning Area is located in the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin; the pollutants of greatest concern are carbon monoxide, ozone and particulate matter. According to monitoring stations located in Chico, state standards for these three pollutants were exceeded in 1989, 1990 and 1991, but not in the first half of 1992; more recent data has not been provided by the Butte County Air Pollution Control District. There have been no reported violations of nitrogen dioxide or sulfur dioxide standards anywhere in the Sacramento Valley for at least 15 years.

The federal Clean Air Act and the California Clean Air Act establish a planning and regulatory framework to achieve and maintain air quality standards. Areas not meeting these standards are called "nonattainment" areas and are subject to specific planning requirements. Butte County is considered to be a nonattainment area for ozone, and the Chico Urban Area is a nonattainment area for carbon monoxide. As with most counties in the state, Butte County is also a moderate nonattainment area for particulate matter. The attainment plans for these pollutants are designed to improve air quality.

The *North Sacramento Valley Air Basin 1991 Attainment Plan* contains a number of feasible control measures and an ambitious implementation schedule; however, calculations of the emissions reductions associated with each control measure are not available, so it is unclear to what extent the control measures will lead to attainment of standards. There is also some question about whether additional control measures are needed to attain the carbon monoxide standard in the Chico Urban Area<sup>1</sup>.

Traditional air quality management strategies have focused on controlling stationary sources or pollutants, primarily from manufacturing operations, and reducing motor vehicle emissions with technological controls. In developing this General Plan, the effect of changes in development policies on the viability of ongoing efforts to achieve required reductions in emissions of air pollutants was analyzed. The General Plan is intended to foster an urban development pattern that will reduce reliance on automobile travel, and thus help to achieve and maintain carbon monoxide and ozone standards. However, growth in population and employment over the planning period will generate additional traffic; this will have an adverse effect on air quality that will be only partially mitigated by technological controls.

**Interagency Coordination.** Air quality planning at the General Plan level allows for more comprehensive solutions to air quality problems than does case-by-case review of individual development proposals. Comprehensive air quality planning is especially important

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<sup>1</sup>

For further information on the additional control measures, see Section 7 of the *Chico Urban Area Carbon Monoxide Plan*, July 1992, available from the City.



because most readily available pollution control "hardware" has already been applied to stationary sources and motor vehicles. Changes in land use and travel patterns, particularly measures intended to promote bike and transit use and create "pedestrian-friendly" neighborhoods and commercial areas, will help attain ambient air quality standards and ensure that healthful air is maintained in the future.

Environmental review processes under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) will help the City and the Butte County Air Pollution Control District identify new stationary, mobile, and indirect sources. In addition, new stationary sources of air pollutants will be required to meet the rules and regulations of the District. These regulations require that sources of hazardous materials or air pollutants above certain thresholds obtain permits prior to construction or operation of the facility. The District's regulations may require use of Best Available Control Technology (BACT), emission reductions at other locations to offset proposed increases, and detailed analysis and/or modeling of air pollution impacts prior to issuing a permit. In certain cases, the District also may require on-site monitoring prior to and after construction, and may attach conditions on permit approvals, as necessary to avoid public health hazards and community complaints.

### **Guiding Policies: Air Quality**

- OS-G-1     Strive to meet all state and federal ambient air quality standards and reduce the generation of air pollutants.
  
- OS-G-2     Encourage mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development and circulation systems that promote use of alternatives to the automobile for transportation, including bicycles and bus transit, along with carpooling.

Increased use of transit and carpooling, coupled with land use and circulation patterns that promote walking and bicycle use, can lead to a decrease in daily trips, less emissions, and improved air quality.

*See also policies in Section 4.1: Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation, and Section 4.2: Transportation System Management in the Transportation Chapter.*

- OS-G-3     Promote the use of trees and plants in landscaping to reduce air pollutant levels.

*Specific proposals for planting are in the Community Design Element. See policies in Sections 2.1 and 2.2. Landscaping is required for industrial development to protect adjacent non-industrial uses (see Policy LU-I-27).*



- OS-G-4      Coordinate air quality, transportation, and land use planning efforts with other jurisdictions and public agencies responsible for air quality management.

### **Implementing Policies: Air Quality**

- OS-I-1      Cooperate with the Butte County Air Pollution Control District to achieve five percent annual emissions reductions for nonattainment pollutants, including ozone and particulate matter, by implementation of air pollution control measures as required by state and federal standards.

To reduce potential air emissions to the extent feasible, all new stationary sources in the Planning Area will be subject to the "New Source Review Rule" requirements administered by the Butte County Air Pollution Control District, and Best Available Control Technologies (BACT), or the current best technologies available at the time of project review, will have to be used to reduce air polluting emissions.

- OS-I-2      In new subdivisions with more than 200 dwelling units, require internal street design to include the installation of dedicated pedestrian/bicycle pathways connecting to adjacent residential and commercial areas as well as schools, parks and recreational areas. Bike paths and dedications would be required where allowed by law, as well as connecting paths from internal streets as a condition of development.

This policy is intended to encourage people to walk or bicycle by making it easier to use these modes and thus eliminate the need for more automobile trips, thereby reducing air polluting emissions.

*See also Transportation Element policies T-G-5, T-I-10 and T-I-19.*

- OS-I-3      Cooperate with the Butte County Air Pollution Control District to implement public education measures outlined in the 1991 *Air Quality Attainment Plan*.

Measures are divided into three categories, including community contact, education, and public information.

- Community contact measures include the occurrence of community events that promote clean air, such as participating in Rideshare Week/Rideshare Fair displays, public presentations for interested community organizations

and schools, and public workshops to present proposed strategies and programs.

- Educational programs include the continued development of multimedia presentations and public displays, development and dissemination of public information materials, and development of advertising and promotion spots.
- Public information programs include continued development of local media relations, involvement of the community in brainstorming workshops to develop regulations and strategies, coordination with and provision of information to local organizations and schools, and development and coordination of an Advisory Program with local schools and media for health alert advisory episodes.

OS-I-4 Urge Butte County to adopt landscaping standards for urban development within the Planning Area that meet or exceed the City of Chico's standards and to participate with the City in the urban forest program.

OS-I-5 Because mobile emissions have been shown to be a direct contributor to air quality problems, encourage child care centers to be provided near centers of employment and/or residential areas with incentives to promote employer participation; encourage flex time, shortened work week and telecommunications for reducing vehicle miles traveled; and continue to evaluate and improve transit scheduling, as appropriate.

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation policies and Transportation System Management policies in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 and land use policies on neighborhood mixed use centers, coupled with limits on urban expansion imposed by the Land Use Chapter, also will reduce total vehicle miles travelled.

OS-I-6 Because the rate of emission releases is correlated to the average speeds, idling times and the amount of stop and go movements, take the following actions to reduce emissions from these activities.

- Explore synchronization of signals on a fair-share basis where new development proposals create the need for intersection signalization along an arterial, secondary, or major highway;

- Consider completion of circulation links, where deficiencies occur, as a project benefit and thus a potential overriding consideration, if warranted;<sup>2</sup>
- Consider phasing-out "drive-through" uses associated with fast food restaurants and banks;
- Work with CUSD to ensure that new schools provide drop-off facilities that will not impede traffic on adjacent streets;
- Prohibit roadway construction and improvements or maintenance, during peak hours, for any roadway operating at level of service "C" or below, or where average speeds are less than 30 mph; and
- Ensure that bus turnouts and sheltered stops are provided along existing and planned transit routes.

OS-I-7 Work with the Butte County Air Pollution Control District on implementing restrictions on burning of leaves, residential and agricultural burnings, and other waste materials, and programs to encourage leaf composting. Participate in public education efforts and explore means of collecting residential leaves and burning composting.

OS-I-8 Require applicants whose development would result in construction-related fugitive dust emissions to control such emissions as follows:

- During clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation operations, fugitive dust emissions shall be controlled by regular watering, paving of construction roads, or other dust-preventive measures.
- All material excavated or graded shall be sufficiently watered to prevent excessive amounts of dust. Watering, with complete coverage, shall occur at least twice daily, preferably in the late morning and after work is done for the day.

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<sup>2</sup>

Under the California Environmental Quality Act, a statement of overriding considerations is required to approve a project that will cause significant adverse environmental effects that can not be substantially mitigated.

- All clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation activities shall cease when winds exceed 15 mph averaged over 1 hour.
- All material transported off-site shall be either sufficiently watered or securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust.
- The area disturbed by demolition, clearing, grading, earth-moving, or excavation operations shall be minimized at all times.
- Portions of the construction site to remain inactive longer than a period of 3 months shall be seeded and watered until grass cover is grown.
- All on-site roads shall be paved as soon as feasible or watered periodically or chemically stabilized.

OS-I-9      Require applicants whose development would result in construction-related exhaust emissions to minimize such emissions by maintaining equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications and during smog season (May through October) by not allowing construction equipment to be left idling for long periods.

OS-I-10     Require applicants whose development would result in potential carbon monoxide (CO) "hot spot" impacts to consult with the City to ensure that schools, hospitals, or day care facilities are not located near such "hot spots".

OS-I-11     Continue to require that all wood burning devices installed in any residence built in a new subdivision or housing development be EPA Phase-II certified or meet EPA standards applicable at the time of project approval.

OS-I-12     Explore the feasibility of requiring existing older woodburning stoves to be retrofitted with devices meeting federal EPA standards at the time a residence is sold or a major alteration or addition initiated.

Funding for the retrofit program could come from impact fees required for installation of new wood-burning stoves.

OS-I-13     Low No<sub>x</sub> water heaters shall be installed in any new residence built within the project area.



- OS-I-14 All new construction shall comply with the energy efficiencies mandated by Title 24 construction requirements. New facilities will be substantially more energy efficient than the facilities they replace or existing units, even at higher densities.

## 7.2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND HABITAT CONSERVATION

The Planning Area includes a rich and diverse range of biological resources. This can be attributed to the quality and quantity of natural habitats and to variations in topography, soil type, and elevation. The most notable natural habitat types include annual grassland, riparian woodland, permanent wetland, vernal pools/seasonal wetland and valley oak woodlands. Many of these habitats deserve special consideration due to their particular sensitivity, presence of one or more rare, endangered or threatened species, low tolerance to development or limited distribution.

The *Master Environmental Assessment* and the *Comprehensive Habitat Mapping and Biological Resource Inventory*, conducted as part of Plan preparation, include detailed background information on these biological resources. Annotated aerial photographs and notes on the results of field investigations, habitat mapping and evaluation conducted for this General Plan are also available for review at City offices.

A number of special status species (i.e. listed as rare, threatened, or endangered by state or federal agencies, or candidate species proposed for such listing) are known to occur within the Planning Area. Notable as endangered are the Butte County meadowfoam, hairy orcutt and slender orcutt grasses, Green's tuctoria, winter run chinook salmon, the bald eagle and the Western yellow-billed cuckoo. Other sensitive resources of regional importance include the Eastern Tehama deer herd, Butte County checkermallow, Swainson's hawk and andromous fisheries. A complete list of sensitive species is in Table 6-1 in the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

The sensitive habitat types span jurisdictional boundaries, with a multitude of agencies involved in their management and administration. Some of the habitats cover a small range, whereas others are visible at a regional scale. The size of the habitat does not necessarily correlate with its importance; the smaller habitats are often remnants of a much larger past range, and may have the survivor's distinction of being unique.

Although discussed here as distinct entities, these habitats are not functionally discrete. Instead, vegetation associated with one habitat may occur in another, and there are frequently large areas of transition, or ecotones. Animals range between different habitat types, and their movement patterns may vary daily, or seasonally. The interaction of the varied plants and animals as an ecosystem, as well as the importance of natural cycles, must be considered

when assessing the value of a particular area for preservation or for development.

### **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

The General Plan's conservation strategy focuses on habitat conservation as the most effective way to protect individual special status species, minimize impacts on sensitive biological resources, and preserve plant and animal diversity.

Based on the results of the fieldwork and other studies undertaken as part of the General Plan, a habitat "scoring system" was devised (see *Comprehensive Habitat Mapping and Biological Resource Inventory for the City of Chico General Plan Area*) to rank sensitive habitats in the Planning Area. This information was used to classify certain habitats into either Resource Conservation or Resource Management areas. The purpose of each classification is explained below.

**Resource Conservation Areas.** Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs) contain the most sensitive and valuable habitat that requires protection and would be conserved in perpetuity.

Sites identified as Resource Conservation Areas on Figure 7-1 are either under public ownership or have been agreed to be preserved by project proponents as a condition of development approval. These Resource Conservation Areas contain selected seasonal and permanent wetlands, riparian woodlands, valley oak woodlands, riverine habitats, areas known to support special status species, and areas known to serve as important wildlife movement corridors. Sites include Bidwell Park, especially areas in Upper Bidwell Park or near Big Chico Creek, other creeksides, wetlands near Sycamore Creek and Butte County meadowfoam preserve located in the Warfield/Doe Mill Road area.

RCAs provide opportunities for various non-development oriented uses. They may be used for limited passive recreation, educational purposes, as sites for scientific study, or as locations for off-site mitigation banking when on-site habitat preservation for development projects proves infeasible. Mitigation could include enhancement or restoration components, expansion of existing RCAs through land purchase and preservation, or creation of new RCAs altogether.

**Resource Management Areas.** Resource Management Areas (RMAs) generally contain some resources that merit long-term preservation, but further study is necessary before a precise delineation of acreage to be preserved can take place.



# Resource Conservation and Resource Management Areas

Figure 7-1



-  Resource Conservation Area
- Resource Management Areas**
-  Vernal Pool/Wetland
-  Mixed Riparian, Willow Scrub, Cottonwood Riparian, Valley Oak Riparian, Valley Oak Woodland, Intermittent Riverine
-  Blue Oak Woodland, Live Oak Woodland, Mixed Oak Woodland, Blue Oak Savanna
-  Emergent Wetland, Open Water
-  Non-Native Annual Grassland that provides drainage to other sensitive habitats

Source: Master Environmental Assessment for the General Plan, 1994; and Blayne Dyett.



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

**City of Chico**  
GENERAL PLAN

November 1994





RMAs indicated on Figure 7-1 include ecological systems representing important habitat types, such as blue oak woodland, blue oak savanna, valley oak woodland, mixed oak woodland, live oak woodland, cottonwood riparian, valley oak riparian, mixed riparian, willow scrub, open water, emergent wetland, vernal pools, lower perennial riverine, upper perennial riverine, and intermittent riverine habitats. Portions of some of the RMAs shown in Figure 7-1 include areas of highly sensitive habitats that may be appropriate for on-site preservation and management, or for incorporation into an existing RCA, if one is adjacent. This determination would occur during review of development proposals for sites within RMAs.

RMAs, unlike RCAs, would allow some level of development if proposed projects demonstrate that sensitive resources would be protected. The intent of the RMA designation is to ensure that biological resources are considered and responded to in development design, prior to substantial design/layout/engineering of a development application. For sites located partly, or wholly, within an RMA, a development applicant would be required to participate in a pre-application review with City staff to identify and discuss the biological resources potentially affected by the project and the applicable policies and review procedures for RMAs. The applicant would then submit a preliminary Resource Management Plan (RMP), or required elements thereof, along with a development application. Information required for the preliminary RMP would be similar to information currently required for environmental review. The RMP would be revised during the environmental review process, and the final RMP would be approved when environmental review is complete to avoid any additional steps in the process.

Both the Resource Conservation Areas and the Resource Management Areas are intended to be of sufficient size to ensure the long-term viability of the habitats and species included.

### **Guiding Policies: Biotic Resources**

- OS-G-5      Protect habitats that are sensitive, rare, declining, unique or represent valuable biological resources in the Planning Area. These include Resource Conservation and Resource Management areas identified in Figure 7-1.
  
- OS-G-6      Preserve and protect populations and supporting habitat of special status species within the Planning Area, including species that are state or federally-listed as Rare, Threatened, or Endangered, all federal "candidate" species for listing and other species on officially adopted federal and/or state listings, and all California Species of Special Concern.

- OS-G-7 Minimize impacts to sensitive natural habitats throughout the Planning Area.

In new developments, emphasis should be placed on protecting and preserving valuable and sensitive natural habitats. The comprehensive habitat mapping and biological resource inventory prepared as part of Plan preparation shall be consulted when reviewing development applications.

- OS-G-8 Preserve and protect areas determined to function as regional wildlife corridors, particularly those areas that provide natural connections permitting wildlife movement between designated sensitive habitats and all areas being considered for future conservation because of their high value.

For terrestrial wildlife, particularly those species that require large home ranges (such as the bobcat and mountain lion), connecting corridors are an essential habitat element because they permit access into areas that might otherwise be too small to use if isolated. For less mobile species, such as small mammals, corridors become more important in the long-term because they permit occasional movements between populations, which provides for genetic exchange and more healthy individuals. The preservation of corridors includes development of maintenance and monitoring programs, designation of protective buffers, and construction of under crossings, as necessary.

- OS-G-9 Provide for no net loss of overall wetland acreage; where such losses may be unavoidable at the project level, require mitigation that meets the no net loss goal.

This policy is consistent with state and federal wetlands policies. The City will continue to work with state and federal regulatory agencies, exploring the feasibility of wetlands mitigation alternatives, including provisions for mitigation banking, transfer of development rights, and land purchases, to implement the "no net loss" goal.

## **Implementing Policies: Biotic Resources**

### **Resource Conservation Areas**

- OS-I-15 Protect and preserve areas identified for Resource Conservation in Figure 7-1, and amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a Resource Conservation zoning district and habitat protection standards, particularly buffering, for sites abutting Resource Conservation Areas.

- OS-I-16 Establish a fund for acquisition of Resource Conservation Areas to ensure permanent protection, if tax revenues not otherwise committed can be allocated for the purpose. Also, explore the feasibility of establishment of maintenance district(s) for ongoing management activities.

Funds are not required for acquiring sites currently designated as Resource Conservation Areas, but only for others that may be identified for acquisition in the future. It is expected that most Resource Conservation Areas would be dedicated as environmental mitigation or exaction.

- OS-I-17 Establish a fund for ongoing management and monitoring of Resource Conservation Areas, and implement the following measures for long-term protection of RCAs:
- Controlled public access points will be identified and posted as such. Signs will also be provided at access points prohibiting use of all motorized vehicles in the RCA and posting other regulations that apply to the RCA. Maps of public access points should be made available to the public e.g., through the City of Chico.
  - Each RCA should be checked periodically for vandalism or other unauthorized activities (e.g., dumping, camping, unauthorized motor vehicle entry, etc.).
- OS-I-18 Establish a long-term comprehensive planning program to ensure the long-term viability of Resource Conservation Areas, both under public and private ownership.
- OS-I-19 Explore and implement, where feasible, linking Resource Conservation Areas with interconnecting open space corridors, particularly those which provide access to water sources and enhance overall biological diversity of the resource area.
- OS-I-20 Explore and implement, where feasible, means to minimize or avoid interference with sensitive wildlife on the urban fringe by domestic pets.
- OS-I-21 Ensure that all new developments restrict the use of fencing in locations essential for wildlife movement and place structures so as to minimize interference with wildlife corridors.



- OS-I-22      Ensure that open space corridors along creeks include protective buffers (non-development setbacks) preserve existing riparian vegetation through the environmental review process, and continue to require a minimum of 25-foot dedication and acquisition of 75 feet for a total of 100-foot setback from top-of-bank along creeks.

Ideally, the Resource Conservation Area/open space corridor preserve network will include representative examples of more common plan communities (e.g. grasslands, oak woodland), and those regularly disturbed (such as croplands) or frequently visited (such as Bidwell Park) to maintain the natural diversity of species and habitats. Bicycle and pedestrian paths and low impact recreational uses may be permitted in these open space corridors.

#### **Resource Management Areas**

- OS-I-23      Protect sites designated as Resource Management Areas by amending the Zoning Ordinance to include a Resource Management (RM) Overlay District to apply to sites designated as Resource Management Areas. Establish use regulations and development standards for the RM District, including provisions for clustering of development in Resource Management Areas, waiver of minimum-lot-width requirements, and narrower local street widths where these would enhance protection of sensitive habitats and resources, and prohibition of grading prior to receipt of discretionary approvals, subject to CEQA review.
- OS-I-24      Establish procedures for reviewing development applications in Resource Management Areas and for approving off-site mitigation to replace resources affected by development.

Prior to submittal of a development application on sites wholly or partially within an RMA, the project proponent shall meet with City staff at a Development review Committee meeting or other appropriate meeting, to discuss how the proposed project could affect biological resources, including protected species and sensitive habitats present or potentially present. City staff will review techniques and design solutions to protect those resources, and mitigation alternatives for those resources which can not be avoided. If the project applicant proposes to remove or irreparably affect sensitive biological resources, then options for habitat compensation will be discussed, including on-site and off-site preservation, creation, or enhancement of RCAs.



The City will establish a checklist for use in "pre-application" conferences to ensure that all information relevant to sensitive biological resources mitigation and monitoring is reviewed, and all responsible agencies are consulted, and that applicants are aware of the City's interest in and procedures for preserving, protecting and managing resources potentially affected by development in RMAs.

- OS-I-25     Require applicants for development with sites wholly or partially within Resource Management Areas designated on Figure 7-1 and within the Resource Management Overlay District to submit preliminary resource management information including that necessary for analysis, monitoring, and reporting, as stipulated in OS-I-26 and as needed for completion of an environmental assessment. The preliminary resource management information and conceptual development plan shall be submitted for review during the pre-application development review process.

It is expected that on sites where biological resources exist and are not identified as Resource Conservation Areas, development and the resources would coexist.

- OS-I-26     Establish guidelines for the preparation and submittal of Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Information in a *Best Practices Manual* to ensure consistency, streamline the development review process, and expedite Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Information preparation.

The Preliminary Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Information submitted by applicants will be required to include, at a minimum, the following information:

- An inventory of known or potentially-occurring biological resources within the RMA-designated acreage and surrounding buffer areas within 500 feet of the project site. This data should include: location of oak trees 6 inches or greater in width measured 4 feet above the base of the tree; descriptions and maps of all habitat areas; lists of all special status species observed or suspected of occurring on the property; and an analysis of on-site wildlife movement corridors, demonstrating connectivity between proposed on-site open space and off-site creekways and RCAs.
- An analysis of how the preliminary site plan responds to biological resources and how applicable provisions of the City's *Best Practices Manual* were incorporated into engineering and design; identification of all proposed open space (including parks and private opens space), habitat

preserves, protective setbacks (non-development buffers), any proposed corridor connections to off-site open space and RCAs, and general "footprints" of structures, major access roads and parking areas.

- Measures proposed to mitigate unavoidable impacts to biological resources. This "mitigation package" can include combinations of on-site preserved (managed) and created acreage, with restoration and enhancement components to increase habitat value when a loss of sensitive habitat acreage is unavoidable. Clustering preserved acreage on-site, or with contiguous open space parcels just off-site, will be encouraged. When habitat preservation on-site is not feasible (i.e., preserved parcels would be too small to be of any value, see *OS-I-22*), then off-site mitigation should occur, preferably at priority expansion areas for existing RCAs, or as expansions of proposed or existing open space acreage within adjoining or nearby RMAs.
- Topographic map and aerial photograph, showing property boundaries and delineated habitats (by type).
- Preliminary information on soils and hydrology, including drainage basin and watershed boundaries, surface flow patterns, depth to groundwater, and boundaries of known wetlands, creeks, and open water bodies. No detailed hydrologic analysis (e.g., peak flow or flood stage data) is necessary.
- Other information, as requested by City staff, that may be relevant to the type(s) of biological resources present in the RMA.
- Draft environmental documents prepared (e.g., negative declaration, environmental impact report) will consider the development application materials and the Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Information together. After City staff review and approval, the Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Information will be published along with the draft environmental document.

The final environmental document(s) will generally include the additional Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting components listed below; the specific details and level of effort required to define each component will differ depending on the type of biological resources present on the site. The City's *Best Practices Manual* should be followed

unless other suitable protection and management methods are developed by a qualified biologist approved by the City.

- **Buffer Zones.** Standards and requirements for buffering sensitive natural habitats, including allowable uses, minimum widths and interface function, revegetation plans (if proposed), management practices, and access limitations.
- **Wildlife Movement Corridors.** Proposals to encourage wildlife use of RMAs, to be based on field surveys by a qualified biologist documenting current wildlife movement and activity on-site. The focus here should be on the more mobile terrestrial vertebrates, with mule deer, bobcat, mountain lion, raccoon, long-tailed weasel, gray fox, red fox, and coyote being some examples of suitable "target" species. Every effort should be made to preserve and enhance connections of on-site corridors with off-site open space, creekways, and RCAs. If not already part of the mitigation acreage, then long-term management and monitoring of the corridors should be addressed.
- **Recreational & Education Plan.** Guidelines and standards for providing, and limiting, recreational activities, if applicable to the RMA, including descriptions of proposed recreational activities within public open space (e.g., parkways, green space, or golf courses). Where biological resources will abut urban uses, ways to restrict or prevent access into those habitats should be prescribed. An educational program to increase public awareness of sensitive resources and use restrictions, including instructional and interpretive signage, hiking trails with descriptive pamphlets/guides, wildlife viewing platforms near preserve areas, and other types of public information should be included, if appropriate.
- **Habitat for Special Status Species.** In most cases, habitat supporting special status species should be incorporated into larger mitigation areas. However, with some species, such as isolated plant populations, smaller set-asides may be necessary. This section of the Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Program should address the unique management techniques associated with managing and maintaining the viability of these areas.

- **Habitat Enhancement.** Measures proposed to enhance habitats on-site not associated with mitigation acreage should be described. Some relevant examples would include limitations on mowing/grazing, fencing to stimulate oak tree regeneration, uses of native species in landscaping, installation of wildlife nest boxes/nest structures, establishment of thickets and shrubby borders for small mammal cover, and promoting or planting of emergent and submergent vegetation in created ponds.
- **Mitigation and Monitoring Program.** Actions to be taken for maintenance and long-term monitoring of both on-site and off-site mitigation acreage should be listed, including annual management practices to prevent no loss of value through disturbance, and remedial actions which may be taken to ensure success for created, restored, or enhanced habitats. Funding responsibilities for mitigation and monitoring also should be defined.

OS-I-27      Ensure that biological resources protected on-site or in combination with adjoining sites are of sufficient acreage to represent the natural diversity of the landscape (e.g., oak woodlands) adequately, to protect the supporting watershed for wetlands, creeks, and vernal pools, and to maintain the viability of species inhabiting the RMA.

OS-I-28      Allow off-site mitigation when preserving and protecting biological resources on-site in an RMA proves to be infeasible (i.e., acreage too small, use intensity too high, etc.). Priority should be given to in-kind mitigation at specially designated expansion areas for existing RCAs. As an alternative, expanding existing or proposed preserves through land acquisition within other RMAs should be allowed.

All policies related to on-site mitigation also apply to off-site mitigation, including the requirement for preparation of a preliminary Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Program for off-site mitigation areas.

OS-I-29      Encourage groups of property owners to prepare a joint Resource Management, Monitoring and Reporting Program and permit transfer of development between properties when joint development and management efforts are undertaken.



### **Habitat Conservation**

- OS-I-30 Prepare a *Best Practices Manual*, including general development standards and resources management guidelines for all sensitive habitats found in the Planning Area.

Standards and guidelines should be developed for the following habitat types: oak woodlands (i.e., blue oak woodland, blue oak savanna, valley oak woodland, mixed oak woodland, live oak woodland), riparian woodlands (i.e., cottonwood riparian, valley oak riparian, mixed riparian, willow scrub), vernal pools, emergent wetlands, riverine habitats (i.e. lower perennial riverine, upper perennial riverine, intermittent riverine, and fisheries), and open water. Many oak tree protection procedures during construction can, for example, be standardized, as can development setbacks from riparian and riverine systems.

- OS-I-31 Coordinate with non-profit conservation groups and land trusts to identify target sites and projects for fund raising and volunteer participation for protection, enhancement, maintenance, and public education on protected natural resource areas.

### **Biological Resource Areas outside RCAs and RMAs**

- OS-I-32 Review development in areas not designated as RCAs or RMAs under current procedures that require an environmental assessment, compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, and state and federal agency requirements for resources protection.
- OS-I-33 Update the biological resources map every 5-years following adoption of the General Plan with site-specific biological information provided by qualified biologist(s) for development projects, information on special status species, and any other relevant document information.

This updating process will minimize the need for the City to undertake additional fieldwork, while still having the most accurate information available for planning purposes.

- OS-I-34 Work with the Butte County Mosquito Abatement District to ensure that acceptable disease vector control measures are coordinated with preservation of resources such as wetlands, recognizing the community's interest in meeting federal and state wetlands protection policies.

- OS-I-35      Work with the California Department of Fish and Game to ensure the preservation and enhancement of species of resident and anadromous fish in creeks in the Planning Area.

### **7.3      WATER QUALITY**

The State Water Resources Control Board has jurisdiction over nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards, whose charge it is to identify and implement water quality objectives. The Planning Area falls under the authority of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 5), and is located within the Sacramento River Basin (Basin 5A). The Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) which affects this hydrologic sub-basin was most recently revised in March 1990.

Declining water quality is a concern not only because of potential public health effects but also because of the combined effects of polluted discharges on aquatic life. The Planning Area is not yet subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting process because the existing population is less than 100,000, though some parts of the City of Chico, such as the airport, are subject to the process. Given current population growth projections, the City could become subject to the permit requirements by 1998.

The groundwater basin underlying Chico supplies the majority of municipal and agricultural water demands of the Planning Area (and areas well beyond). The groundwater system is largely sustained by recharge in the foothills located east of Chico, streamflow infiltration from Big Chico and Little Chico creeks and Lindo Channel, and to a lesser degree by direct infiltration of precipitation. There is no evidence of substantial overdraft in the Planning Area, but this issue is being currently studied by California Water Service and others interested in the groundwater basin.

**Groundwater Contamination.** The use of septic tanks in the Planning Area and the infiltration of urban storm runoff has contributed to the creation of areas of high nitrate concentrations. Groundwater nitrate concentrations in the Planning Area range from 0.7 milligrams per liter (mg/l) to 168 mg/l. Some locations exceed the state's Maximum Contaminant Level for nitrate (45 mg/l). Eventual transition of residences from septic systems to wastewater treatment service, and limitation on issuance of new septic system permits, may gradually assist in the elimination of nitrates. Conversion of septic systems may have an impact on groundwater supply and recharge. A Nitrate Action Plan has been adopted by the City and further studies are underway to confirm and update technical data on sources and locations of nitrate contamination.

Nitrate concentrations in predominately agricultural areas range from 50.3 to 80.5 mg/l as a result of livestock feedlots, agricultural fertilizers, and natural soil nitrogen. These concentrations suggest that nitrate concentrations in groundwater may not be solely due to on-site disposal of domestic wastewater with septic tanks, but also may be attributed to agricultural uses and collection of urban stormwater runoff in drainages and drywells.

There are four areas of known groundwater contamination associated with Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Three of these areas are associated with perchlorethylene contamination from dry cleaning establishments. The fourth plume is a result of trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination from a former metal tube can manufacturer.

Lands that are preserved in agriculture are subject to surface water flows that carry particles away from the site. This erosive action results in downslope or downstream sedimentation, which can impair drinking water, as well as adversely affect fisheries and water-related habitat. In addition, toxic substances may bind to soil particles, which serve as "taxis" to distribute and circulate contaminants throughout the riparian, estuarine, and marine systems.

The low foothill area east of Chico is the primary aquifer recharge area for Chico's domestic groundwater. The groundwater is particularly vulnerable to contamination from urban activity in this area, including construction, grading, use of equipment and automobiles, pesticides, herbicides, sewer leakage, and other potential contaminants. Special precautions must be taken to prevent groundwater contamination from any development in the foothills.

### **Guiding Policies: Water Quality**

- OS-G-10 Enhance the quality of surface water resources of the Planning Area and prevent their contamination.
- OS-G-11 Comply with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's regulations and standard to maintain and improve groundwater quality in the Planning Area.
- OS-G-12 Where feasible, given flood control requirements, maintain the natural condition of waterways and flood plains and protect watersheds to ensure adequate groundwater recharge and water quality.

## Implementing Policies: Water Quality

*See also policies in Section 5.4: Storm Drainage and Table 5.6-1.*

- OS-I-36 Continue to work with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and Butte County Environmental Health Department in the implementation of the Nitrate Action Plan and land use controls for the protection of groundwater quality and the foothill primary recharge area.
- OS-I-37 Continue to require that new residential development at a density greater than one unit per acre and commercial and industrial areas annexed to the City be connected to the City's wastewater collection system. Existing residential development and individual houses where septic systems have failed also may be connected to the system.
- OS-I-38 Adopt standards of land use controls to prevent contamination of the foothill primary recharge area from any development which may occur.
- OS-I-39 Maintain an inventory of known sources of groundwater and soil contamination within the Planning Area, including underground storage tanks, landfills, septic tanks, agricultural and industrial uses and prepare annual reports of groundwater quality and efforts being undertaken to eliminate groundwater and soil contamination.
- OS-I-40 Periodically monitor and prepare reports on surface water quality in Big Chico, Butte, Little Chico, Mud, Sycamore, and Comanche Creeks.
- OS-I-41 Require use of Best Management Practices to control runoff from all new development within the Planning Area.

*See also policies PP-I-34, PP-I-36 and PP-I-37 which address storm drainage and detention/retention and incentives for "zero-net" stormwater runoff, such as reduced storm drainage impact fees.*

- OS-I-42 Require older houses to convert to low-flow water systems upon sale or as a condition of approval of a major alteration or addition.

*See also policies in the Parks and Public Facilities and Services Element calling for water conservation, including use of reclaimed water for irrigation in new subdivisions and in existing residences (policies PP-I-26 and PP-I-27). Title 22 of*



*the California Code of Regulations presents standard requirements that will facilitate implementing water conservation programs.*

## 7.4 OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

**Types of Open Space.** According to state law, open space is any parcel or area of land or water that is essentially unimproved and devoted to and designated on a local, regional, or state open space plan as one or more of the following open space uses:

- ▶ **Open space for the preservation of natural resources.** This category includes areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species, particularly rare, endangered or threatened plant and animal species, areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes, rivers, streams, banks of rivers and streams, wetlands and watershed lands, and foothill viewshed and viewing areas. Policies addressing these issues are found in Section 7.2: Biological Resources, and the General Plan Diagram shows Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety.
- ▶ **Open space for the managed production of resources.** Forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber, areas required for recharge of groundwater basins, wetlands, rivers, and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries, and areas containing major mineral deposits all fall into this category. Relevant policies are found in sections 7.3 Water Quality, 7.5 Agriculture, 7.6 Mineral Resources, and the General Plan Diagram shows Open Space for Agriculture and Resource Management.
- ▶ **Open space for outdoor recreation.** Areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value, areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes including access to lake shores, beaches, rivers, and streams, and areas that serve as links between major recreation and open space reserves, including utility easements, stream- and riverbanks, trails, and scenic highway corridors are all considered open space for outdoor recreation. Policies on this topic are found in Chapter 5: Parks, Public Facilities and Services, and the General Plan Diagram shows existing parks and general locations for future parks.
- ▶ **Open space for public health and safety.** This category includes areas requiring special management or regulation due to hazardous or special conditions, such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of

water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality. Policies addressing these issues are found in Chapter 8: Safety and Safety Services, and the General Plan Diagram shows Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety.

### **Guiding Policies: Open Space**

- OS-G-13 Maintain hillsides and viable agricultural lands as open space for resource conservation and preservation of views.
- OS-G-14 Maintain existing views of the foothills from roadways and public uses and other rights-of-way on the valley floor whenever feasible.
- OS-G-15 Preserve and enhance Chico's creeks and the riparian corridors adjacent to them as open space corridors for the visual amenity, drainage, fisheries, wildlife habitats, flood control and water quality value.
- OS-G-16 Where feasible, integrate creekside greenways with the City's open space system and encourage public access to creek corridors.
- OS-G-17 Protect aquifer recharge areas needed to maintain adequate groundwater supplies.
- OS-G-18 Maintain oak woodlands and habitat for sensitive biological resources as open space for resource conservation and resource management.
- OS-G-19 Minimize conflicts between urban and agricultural uses by requiring buffers and greenbelts.
- OS-G-20 Maintain public access to the foothills for recreational purposes and plan for a future network of foothill trails.

### **Implementing Policies: Open Space**

Implementing policies for open space are in Section 3.2: Growth and Physical Expansion; Section 5.1: Parks and Recreational Open Space; Section 7.2: Biological Resources, Section 7.5: Agriculture, and Section 7.6: Mineral Resources. Together, these implementing policies constitute the open space action program required by state law.



## 7.5 AGRICULTURE

The Planning Area possesses fertile soils, adequate water resources, and a relatively long growing season. Agricultural uses in the Planning Area include livestock grazing, orchards, and field crops. Generally, lands to the north and east of Highway 99 are more suitable for seasonal livestock grazing.

Prime agricultural soils, found primarily west of Highway 99, are used for orchards and field crops. Deciduous fruits and nuts are the dominant crops grown in the Planning Area, with the largest acreage devoted to almonds, followed by field crops and pasture land. Small areas are used for rice crops in the southwestern portion of the Planning Area. Figure 7-2 shows the overall distribution of cropland.



*Almond orchards frame the western edge of the Urban Area and play a major role in the local agricultural economy.*

Lands with active Williamson Act contracts are located in the western Planning Area, generally west of Highway 99. Although Williamson Act lands qualify for a lower tax rate on properties' agricultural value, than non-Williamson Act lands, the high production value of almond crops has had equal or greater success than taxation incentives in preserving agricultural uses and prime soils in the Planning Area.

## **Guiding Policies: Agriculture**

See also guiding policies related to open space for agriculture in Section 7.4: Open Space Classifications and in Chapter 3: Land Use, and policies related to urban form and edges in Chapter 2: Community Design.

- OS-G-21 Promote continued agricultural use of important farmland outside the urban area.
- OS-G-22 Continue to work with Butte County to maintain the Greenline.
- OS-G-23 Minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses by requiring buffers or use restrictions or using roads or creeks to separate these uses.

## **Implementing Policies: Agriculture**

- OS-I-43 Adopt a "right-to-farm" ordinance to inform residents of continued agricultural production and the lawful use of agricultural chemicals, including pesticides and herbicides, in proximity to urban areas and to assert that no preexisting or future agricultural operation shall be considered a nuisance solely due to a change in adjacent land use or adjoining residential development.
- OS-I-44 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow organic truck farms (urban agriculture) in buffer or transitional areas adjacent to the urban area, subject to appropriate standards.
- OS-I-45 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish buffering requirements for new urban uses adjacent to agricultural uses, including minimum width and use regulations for these buffer areas and density transfer provisions. Buffers may occur on either side of the greenline depending on opportunities and city actions - towards the agricultural side if acquired by the city and towards the urban side if acquired as part of project approval.

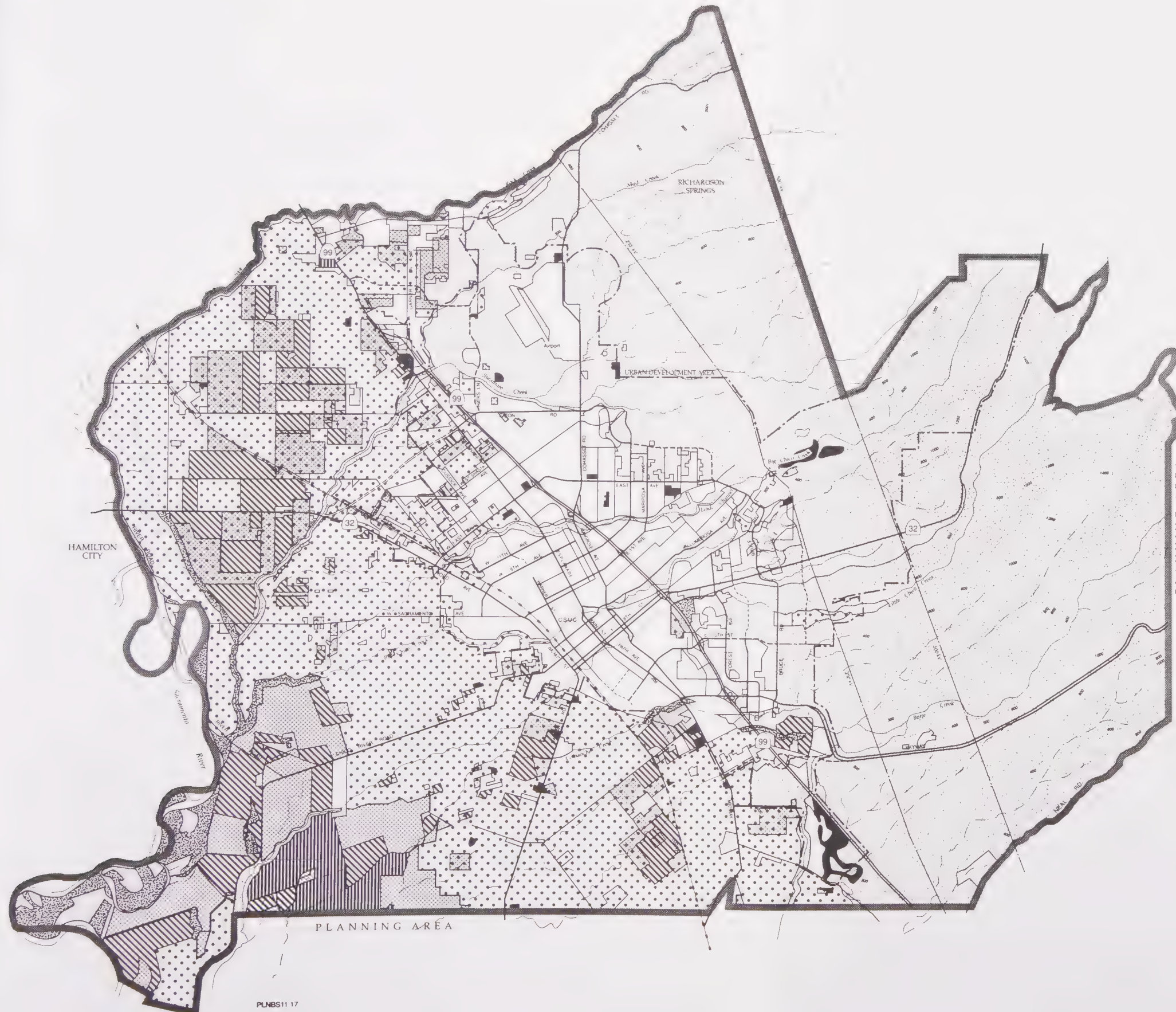
Design criteria for buffers is as follows:





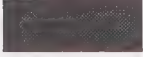
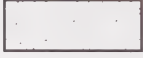

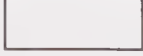
- Buffers shall generally consist of a wide physical separation, generally at least 100 feet wide, including roadways and creeks;



# Crop Pattern

Figure 7-2



-  Pasture/Idle
-  Rice
-  Field Crops
-  Deciduous Fruits/Nuts
-  Semiagricultural and Incidental
-  Native Vegetation
-  Riparian Vegetation
-  Urban

Source: California Department of Water Resources, 1989



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

**City of Chico**  
GENERAL PLAN

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- Narrower buffers may be approved depending on the natural features of the buffer and the relative intensities of the proposed urban use and the adjacent agricultural use;
- Buffers shall be established on the parcel proposed for development, fenced along its urban side, and posted against trespass;
- Permitted uses of the buffer include landscaping and open space (including organic farming). Detailed use regulations will be specified in the Zoning Ordinance. Buffer zones should be credited to the proposed development as open space; and
- In case a proposed development adjoins a City acquired or designated buffer, no separate buffer would be required as part of the proposed development.

OS-I-46      Require payment of an impact fee to offset conversion of agricultural land by purchasing development rights for an greenbelt to further protect agricultural land outside of the urban area.

OS-I-47      Prepare a nexus study to establish an appropriate mitigation fee to offset impacts to agricultural lands.

OS-I-48      Prepare a nexus study to establish an appropriate mitigation fee to offset impacts to loss of open space lands.

## **7.6 MINERAL RESOURCES**

### **EXISTING MINING OPERATIONS**

There are no active mines within the Planning Area, although several areas along Butte Creek were historically mined for gold. The majority of the closest mining operations are located to the southeast, outside of the Planning Area. There are five inactive mines located in the Planning Area: two sand and gravel (portland cement concrete) are located along Little Chico Creek to the east of Highway 99; one gold (lode) mine is located further upstream on the Little Chico Creek; a third sand and gravel mine is located in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area, off State Route 32; and a stone (base material) is located in the northwestern portion of the Planning Area, east of State Route 32. Although not active today, Butte Creek was also historically mined for sand and gravel resources.



## **POTENTIAL MINING RESOURCE AREAS**

Urban preemption of prime mineral deposits and conflicts between mining and other uses throughout California led to passage of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), which establishes policies for conservation and development of mineral lands, and contains specific provisions for the classification of mineral lands by the State Geologist.

SMARA requires all cities and counties to incorporate in their general plans mapped designations approved by the state Division of Mines and Geology. These designations are to include lands categorized as Mineral Resource Zones, the most significant of which is a designation of mineral resources that are of regional or statewide significance.

The state has not yet mapped Butte County's mineral resources, so there is no specific information available on the present potential supply of mineral resources in the Planning Area. Potential resources may be located where these resources historically were mined, that is along creeks and the apron of the foothills. However, buried deposits are not easily identified, so there is no technical basis for defining Mineral Resource Zones, as required by SMARA.

### **Guiding Policies: Mineral Resources**

- OS-G-24    Work with the State and Butte County to identify and protect significant mineral resources in the Planning Area.
- OS-G-25    Coordinate mineral resource extraction with other land uses.

### **Implementing Policies: Mineral Resources**

- OS-I-49    If the State Division of Mines and Geology determines that the Planning Area contains significant aggregate resources, identify areas where sufficient aggregate resources can be conserved to meet the Planning Area's fair share of future regional needs, consistent with state law.
- OS-I-50    If mineral resources of regional or statewide significance are identified by the state within the Planning Area, amend the General Plan to incorporate, as appropriate, policies for conservation and possible future extraction of these resources, consistent with state law.



- OS-I-51 If aggregate mineral resources of regional or statewide significance are identified by the state within incorporated portions of the Planning Area, apply zoning regulations permitting extraction as a conditional use and prohibiting incompatible land uses in Regionally Significant Construction Aggregate Resource Areas, consistent with state law.

This policy meets a requirement of the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975.

## 7.7 ARCHAEOLOGIC, HISTORIC, AND PALEONTOLOGIC RESOURCES

The Planning Area contains many cultural resources, both prehistoric and historic. The *Master Environmental Assessment* contains detailed information on these resources, drawing on the California Archaeological Inventory Northeast Information Center at California State University, Chico (CSUC), the National Register of Historic Places and the Chico Historic Resources Survey, and a map of areas of archaeological sensitivity.

Chico also has an abundance of historic buildings, many of which are located in the South of Campus Historic District, the CSUC campus, downtown Chico, and along The Esplanade. In fact, approximately 350 historic properties are listed in the 1983 Chico Historic Resources Survey. These historic resources contribute to community character and Chico's identity and heritage. Wagon ruts apparent in the exposed lava cap and the rock walls along Humboldt Road from Stilson Canyon Road to Highway 32 are another historical feature deserving of protection.

Development of lands that are now vacant or in agricultural use could disturb surface or subsurface archaeological resources that may, or may not, have been identified to date. Areas of sensitivity for archaeological resources were identified in broad terms for the *Master Environmental Assessment*. Site-specific analysis is needed for future development projects, particularly in areas with a high sensitivity for archaeological resources.

### Guiding Policy: Archaeologic, Historic, and Paleontologic Resources

- OS-G-26 Protect archaeological, historic, and paleontologic resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural values.

*See also policies relating to historic identity and preservation of landmarks in Chapter 2: Community Design.*

### **Implementing Policies: Archaeologic, Historic, and Paleontologic Resources**

**OS-I-52** Require a records search for any development project proposed in areas of high archaeological sensitivity identified in Figure 7-3 to determine whether the site contains known prehistoric or historic cultural resources and/or to determine the potential for discovery of additional cultural resources.

**OS-I-53** Require that sponsors of projects on sites where probable cause for discovery of archaeological resources (as indicated by records search and where resources have been discovered in the vicinity of the project) retain a consulting archaeologist to survey the project site. If unique resources, as defined by state law, are found, require preparation of an archaeologic resource mitigation plan; monitor the project to ensure that mitigation measures are implemented.

More specifically, project sponsors will be required to adhere to the following which will be implemented as an environmental mitigation measure or condition of project approval:



- In the event that any cultural resources are discovered during clearing, grading or construction, project operations shall cease until a qualified archaeologist has evaluated the situation. Following the evaluation, the project sponsor shall implement recommendations provided by the archaeologist, in consultation with the City, that are consistent with state law.
- If human skeleton remains are encountered during construction of a project, the county coroner shall be notified. If the remains are Native American, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.
- Any cultural resources found on the proposed project site will be recorded or described in a professional report and submitted to the Northeast Archaeological Inventory Northeast Information Center at California State University at Chico.



# Areas of Archaeological Sensitivity

Figure 7-3



-  Areas of High Archaeological Sensitivity
-  Areas of Low to Moderate Archaeological Sensitivity

Source: California Archaeological Inventory, Northwest Information Center, CSU, 1993



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

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- OS-I-54 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a Landmark Overlay District to be applied to designated landmarks and historic sites, and require preparation of conservation plans for designated landmarks and historic sites.

Overlay zoning can promote conservation and enhancement of cultural resources and provide a review process for proposed development that may affect historic districts or landmarks. Limitations on demolition of designated historic buildings and historic sites (e.g. the wagon ruts along Humboldt Road) should be considered and a certificate of appropriateness required for alterations and additions to ensure compatibility with the historic or architectural character to be maintained.

## 7.8 ENERGY RESOURCES

Electricity and natural gas are provided to the Planning Area by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). Several high voltage transmission lines traverse the Planning Area, providing power to the area and beyond. The load planning and forecasting conducted by PG&E estimates the demand for natural gas and electric service within the Planning Area to serve future anticipated growth. Power is acquired from PG&E sources, and facilities are designed before the need is present. PG&E does not foresee any difficulties in meeting demand to provide electricity to the Planning Area for future growth.

Cogeneration, including waste to energy development, is a resource that has not been fully developed within the County, and is an area of potential growth. The types of local waste that could be used include rice straw, orchard pruning remains, and sawdust waste. Mass production of solar energy is not currently considered economically feasible in the County, however, passive and active solar energy systems are economically feasible at the professional level. Wind, geothermal, and oil and gas production are not expected to occur at any significant levels.

Reliance on wood products as the primary material in residential construction maintains dependency on a forest products industry which is becoming less able to meet the demand, resulting in increased construction cost and reduced home affordability. Over-reliance on wood products damages remaining forests, including siltation and pollution of streams, loss of wildlife, and reduced recreation potential. The Plan encourages research and use of alternative building materials, consistent with safe construction practices.

### **Guiding Policies: Energy Resources**

- OS-G-27     Conserve scarce or nonrenewable energy resources.
- OS-G-28     Promote energy efficiency in new subdivisions and in building design and encourage use of alternative building materials.

### **Implementing Policies: Energy Resources**

- OS-I-55     Coordinate with PG&E to educate the public about the need to conserve scarce energy resources, insulate buildings to reduce energy required for heating and cooling, and use energy-efficient appliances.
- OS-I-56     Investigate opportunities for using cogeneration technology in public buildings.
- OS-I-57     Require consideration of passive solar energy techniques in subdivision design, including house orientation, street and lot layout, vegetation and protection of solar access.
- OS-I-58     Continue to require new buildings to meet state energy efficiency standards, and develop a section in the Design Manual showing examples of energy conservation in subdivision planning, site layout, landscaping and building design.

New development will be substantially more energy-efficient because of state standards and advances in technology for the building industry. Policies calling for compact development, included in the Community Design and Land Use elements, also will promote energy conservation.

- OS-I-59     Adopt a resolution committing the City to convert city-owned vehicles to alternative fuels within a specified period of time, subject to budget consideration, to reduce energy consumption.
- OS-I-60     Amend the Zoning Ordinance to permit alternative fuel/recharging facilities in Commercial Service and Community Commercial districts, and other districts, subject to appropriate standards.
- OS-I-61     Support research and experimental use of alternative (to wood) building materials in all new public and private construction and remodeling, in accordance with Federal, State and local health and safety and building codes and standards.

## 7.9 WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

The City's and Butte County's Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMP) comply with state-mandated waste reduction goals requiring local agencies to implement source reduction, recycling, and composting activities to reduce solid waste generation by 25 percent by the year 1995, and by 50 percent by the year 2000.

State law requires that each city and county is required to prepare a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE) and a Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE). Together, the SRRE and HHWE comprise the City's IWMP. Household hazardous wastes within Butte County are addressed in the Butte County Hazardous Waste Management Plan, rather than a HHWE. The IWMP for each city in the County, the County's IWMP, and the countywide siting element will comprise the countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan. The countywide siting element to identify preferred sites for new solid waste facilities has not yet begun.

### SOLID WASTE

**Source Reduction and Recycling.** The City's *Source Reduction and Recycling Element* (which is not included in the General Plan, but is published as a separate document) provides a summary and analysis of existing and needed source reduction, recycling, and composting programs and facilities, and strategies for handling special wastes. Implementation measures include variable rate structures to create economic incentives for reduction of waste generation, public awareness programs and regulatory programs. Recycling programs for residential, commercial and industrial areas and for CSUC are proposed to be expanded along with composting programs and special waste programs, including medical waste, dead animals, asbestos, ash, bulky items and construction and demolition debris.

Planning goals specified in the *Source Reduction and Recycling Element* include:

- ▶ Extending the useful life of the Neal Road Sanitary Landfill through cost effective waste diversion programs, including curbside pick-up of yard waste to be composted at the Airport;
- ▶ Promoting effective coordination among the public, private and non-profit sectors to insure effective management and administration of solid waste programs; and
- ▶ Supporting efforts on a local, state and national level for the expansion of recycling markets and increase use of post-consumer secondary materials recovered from the waste stream.



## HAZARDOUS WASTE

**Hazardous Waste.** Hazardous materials management includes the identification, proper transport, and disposal of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials include liquids, solids, and gases which, by themselves, or when placed in contact with other materials, can result in contamination of soil or water, poisonous vapors, fires, or explosions. Hazardous materials can enter the environment via air, soil transport, or surface runoff. When improperly stored or disposed, they contaminate soil and groundwater and pose a general health hazard to the population. Hazardous materials are used and created everyday by some industries, and they are also common household items such as insecticides, waste motor oil, and cleaning fluids.

The Neal Road Landfill, a Class III facility is not permitted to accept hazardous materials. Class I landfills are permitted to accept these materials. There are only two remaining Class I landfills in California permitted to receive untreated hazardous wastes: the Kettleman Hills facility in Kings County, and the Casmalia Resources Facility in Santa Barbara County.

Nearly all of the hazardous materials transported through Butte County, and the Planning Area, are carried by truck on the state highway system. Little or none of the hazardous materials is transported through the County via rail. County roads and city streets are used to transport locally generated wastes from the source to the regional highway system. The County has not quantified the amount of hazardous materials which are transported through Butte County in route to adjoining counties or adjoining states.

In the event of a hazardous materials emergency, several agencies are responsible for timely response, depending on the extent, and type of the incident. The Joint Powers Hazardous Materials Response Team, composed of representatives of the Butte County Fire Department, California Department of Forestry, and members of the Chico, Paradise, Gridley, and Biggs fire departments, responds to large scale, emergency hazardous material incidents within the Planning Area. Chico and Butte County fire departments provide first response for hazardous materials emergencies within the urban area. If and when these emergency incidences become a threat to groundwater supplies, the Regional Water Quality Control Board takes control of the case. The City Fire Department also monitors above ground and underground storage tanks and combustible and flammable liquids for leaks and spills and issues permits to ensure the safe use, handling and storage of such materials.

**Household Hazardous Waste.** Hazardous materials, used in many household products (e.g., drain cleaners, waste oil, cleaning fluids, insecticides, and car batteries), are often improperly disposed of as a part of normal household trash. These materials can interact with other chemicals to create a risk to the general population and can also result in soil and groundwater contamination. Several collection locations have been established throughout the City



for collecting used motor oil to ensure its proper disposal. These collection points serve the entire Planning Area.

Goals of the City's *Household Hazardous Waste Element* include:

- ▶ Minimize the use of and disposable of household hazardous wastes in the City. Establish and promote an environmentally sound methodology for the collection, transportation and disposal of household hazardous wastes; and
- ▶ Evaluate effective methods and alternatives for the collection, transportation and disposal of household hazardous wastes as part of the City's overall solid waste collection and recycling program.

Implementation of the *Household Hazardous Waste Element* is anticipated to accomplish specific short-term (1991-1995) and medium-term objectives (1996-2000).

### **Guiding Policy: Waste Management and Recycling**

- OS-G-29     Reduce the generation of solid waste, including hazardous waste, and recycle those materials that are used, to slow the filling of local and regional landfills, in accord with the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989.

### **Implementing Policy: Waste Management and Recycling**

- OS-I-62     Implement measures specified in the City's Source Reduction and Recycling Element and the Household Hazardous Waste Element.









## **8 SAFETY AND SAFETY SERVICES**

Although Chico is located in one of the least hazard-prone regions in the state, planning for a balanced community entails efforts to minimize risk to life and property from hazards. This Element examines a range of issues related to safety, including those mandated by the state. Policies to mitigate hazards associated with natural and man-made disasters are also prescribed.

### **8.1 FLOODING AND DAM INUNDATION**

Hazards associated with flooding and dam inundation to population are limited as almost all land in the Planning Area subject to these hazards is beyond the boundary of the urban development shown on the General Plan Land Use Diagram. Areas proposed for new growth by this General Plan are also outside 100-year flood zones.

This section of the General Plan summarizes the safety aspects of flooding and dam inundation. Storm drainage facilities are addressed in detail in Section 6: Public Facilities and Services, and Growth Management. Detailed information on flooding and dam inundations is in Section 9 of the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

#### **FLOODING**

Stormwater runoff has, at times, created localized flooding problems in the City of Chico and the agricultural area west of the City. High Sacramento River flood stage creates a backwater in the creek and tributaries, which pass through the Planning Area, and may delay runoff from entering the river. The Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for unincorporated Butte County shows Sacramento River overflow inundating an area about two miles east of the river boundaries (see Figure 8-1). The volume of water within this two-mile backwater area would be expected to increase over time with additional urban runoff associated with growth consistent with this General Plan, as well as from natural drainage.

## RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW

The Safety and Safety Services Element complies with the Government Code which requires "... safety element for the protection of the community from any unreasonable risks associated with the effects of seismically induced surface rupture, ground shaking, ground failure, ... dam failure; slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides, subsidence, liquefaction and other seismic hazards identified pursuant to Chapter 7.8 of the Public Resources code and other geologic hazards known to the legislative body; flooding; and wild land and urban fires... "

The Safety and Safety Services Element also contains policies related to the provision of fire services and law enforcement.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

Issues and policies related to the storage, handling and transportation of hazardous goods are addressed in Section 7.9: Waste Management and Recycling. Safety issues related to land use in the Airport environs are addressed in Section 3.8, and those related to crime prevention through community design in Chapter 2: Community Design. Section 5.6, Resource-Based Thresholds, establishes project review criteria, including performance standards for police and fire protection and storm drainage.

## RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Detailed background information relating to safety and safety services is presented in the *Master Environmental Assessment* as follows:

- 9.2     Flooding and Dam Inundation
- 10.5   Geologic Hazards
- 11     Emergency Response Management
- 15     Storm Drainage
- 16.4   Hazardous Materials Management
- 19.2   Law Enforcement
- 19.3   Fire Safety
- 20.3   Electric and Magnetic Fields

Capacities of channels in the western portion of the Planning Area are also limited, and potential floodflows are believed to be higher than recorded historical occurrences. The FIRM shows floodwater flowing out of the Big Chico Creek Channel near the western edge of the Planning Area. Inadequate channel capacity exacerbates the flooding potential near the Sacramento River. Flood control projects on Little Chico, Big Chico, and Lindo Channel have helped reduce the amount of runoff that flows through the City, reducing potential flooding problems.

### **FLOOD CONTROL AGENCIES**

Flood control is provided to the Planning Area by a variety of federal, state, and local agencies. The general purposes of these agencies are to identify potential flood issues and hazard areas, and devise preventive programs, policies, or structures to avoid or minimize flood destruction.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE).** The ACOE identifies the need for, and constructs major flood control facilities. It also develops flood and dam inundation maps and reports. The ACOE also has constructed several flood control improvements in the Planning Area including the Sycamore Creek and Little Chico Creek Diversion channels, Lindo Channel, and other facilities in Little Chico and Big Chico creeks.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).** FEMA manages the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), providing insurance to the public in communities that participate in the program. FEMA is the main federal government agency contact during natural disasters and publishes the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which identify the extent of flood potential in flood prone communities based on a 100-year flood (or base flood) event.

**Federal Insurance Administration.** The Federal Insurance Administration is the primary agency that delineates potential flood hazard areas and floodways through the FIRMS and the Flood Boundary and Floodway Map.

### **DAM INUNDATION**

The Government Code requires local governments to assess the potential impact that the unlikely event of a dam failure might have on their jurisdiction. Portions of the Planning Area lie within the inundation limits of five dams — Black Butte, Paradise, Magalia, Whiskeytown and Shasta. Flows from these dams could inundate non-urban portions of the Planning Area in case of failure (see Figure 8-1).

### **Guiding Policy: Flooding and Dam Inundation**

- S-G-1 Minimize threat to life and property from flooding and dam inundation.

### **Implementing Policies: Flooding and Dam Inundation**

- S-I-1 As part of project review, ensure that structures subject to the 100-year flood provide adequate protection from flood hazards.
- S-I-2 When considering areas for future urban expansion ensure that impacts of flooding are adequately analyzed.

*See also policies in Section 5.4: Storm Drainage.*

- S-I-3 In designing flood control facilities, consider the need to protect anadromous fisheries and allow for adequate water passage to ensure the survival of downstream riparian ecosystems.

*See also policies in Sections 7.2 and 7.3.*

*Emergency demand for City services in event of flooding is addressed by the City's Emergency Plans; see Section 8.5.*

## **8.2 SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS**

Seismic and geologic hazards represent constraints on development that need to be considered in the General Plan to protect public health and safety. Section 10.5 of the *Master Environmental Assessment* provides a detailed discussion of the seismic and geologic hazards in the Planning Area. A summary follows.

### **SEISMICITY**







The Planning Area is located in one of the least active seismic regions in California (Classified by the state as Seismic Hazard Zone 3). There are no active (those that have moved in Holocene time, i.e. last 11,000 years) faults in the Planning Area. The Cleveland Hill Fault is the closest active fault to the Planning Area, approximately 17 miles southeast.



# Flood and Dam Inundation Area

Figure 8-1



-  **A** No base flood elevations determined (100-year)
-  **Other Flood Areas, Zone X**  
Areas of 500-year flood,  
Areas of 100-year flood with  
average depths of less than 1 foot.
-  **AE** Base flood elevations determined (100-year)
-  **Floodway Areas in AE**
-  **AO** Flood depths of 1-3 feet (100-year)
-  **Dam Inundation Areas**

Note: Inundation Areas are approximate. Whiskeytown Dam Inundation Area includes Black Butte Dam Inundation Area; Shasta Dam Inundation Area includes Whiskeytown and Black Butte Dam Inundation Areas.

Sources: Department of Water Resources;  
Flood Insurance Rate Map Panels 06 0017-0095  
B, -0225 B, -0205 B, -0100 B, -0200 B.



25  
ACRES

0 4,000' 8,000'

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The potentially active Monocline Fault transverses the eastern portion of the Planning Area from the northwest to the southeast. Potentially active faults are those that have moved in Pleistocene time (11,000 - 1.8 million years) and the probability of a significant earthquake occurring is considered low. Additionally, the potentially active Foothills Shear Zone lies adjacent to the southeast corner of the Planning Area.

### SEISMIC RISK TO DEVELOPMENT

**Fault Rupture.** The state has not designated any Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones within the Planning Area, nor are there any known or inferred active faults. Thus, the potential for ground rupture within Chico is considered very low. Known existing faults in the Planning Area are mapped in Figure 8 of the MEA.

**Ground Shaking.** Earthquakes generated on the active Cleveland Hill, Last Chance-Honey Lake, and Midland-Sweitzer faults could result in strong ground shaking within the City.

**Liquefaction.** There is a high potential for liquefaction in the Planning Area along the Sacramento River and a moderate potential for liquefaction in the area east from the Sacramento River to Highway 99. East of Highway 99, there is a generally low potential for liquefaction, except for areas along stream channels.

**Unreinforced Masonry Buildings (URMs).** The state's comprehensive URM law, which mandates certain actions for cities, is applicable only to cities located in Seismic Hazard Zone 4 or higher; the Planning Area is in Seismic Zone 3.

The City requires a structural analysis for any proposed change in the type of occupancy of an unreinforced masonry building which results in an increased hazard to life and/or public safety. Under the authority of the Building Code, the City may require reinforcement of the building as a condition of approving a certificate for the new occupancy. The objective of this policy is to ensure that there will be no increased risk to occupants of these buildings. However, no inventory of the number of URM buildings or their condition has been compiled, so the degree of risk posed by URM buildings in the City is unknown.

### EXPANSIVE SOILS

Highly expansive soils, shown in Figure 8-2, can cause structural damage to foundations and roads and are less suitable for development than non-expansive soils, because they swell when they absorb water and shrink as they dry. Detailed soils and geologic investigations may be necessary to ensure that proper construction techniques and materials are used.



## **LANDSLIDES**

In addition to seismically induced ground-shaking, ground movement can also be triggered by heavy rains or by grading. Landslide potential is influenced by a number of factors, including geology, water influences, and topography.

The rocks that comprise the foothills have undergone extensive deformation and deep weathering. These slopes are susceptible to landslides. Areas where well-developed soils overlie impervious bedrock on steep slopes are also susceptible to landslides. It is unlikely that landslides would occur the western portion of the Planning Area.

## **VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS**

Mount Lassen, approximately 50 miles north-northeast of Chico, is the closest of the Cascade Mountain peaks. At this distance, and in case of a volcanic eruption, heat and molten lava would not be expected to reach the City. However, ash and soot from volcanic eruptions are known to travel great distances and could degrade air quality in Chico and the region.

### **Guiding Policy: Seismic and Geologic Hazards**

- S-G-2 Protect lives and property from seismic and geologic hazards.

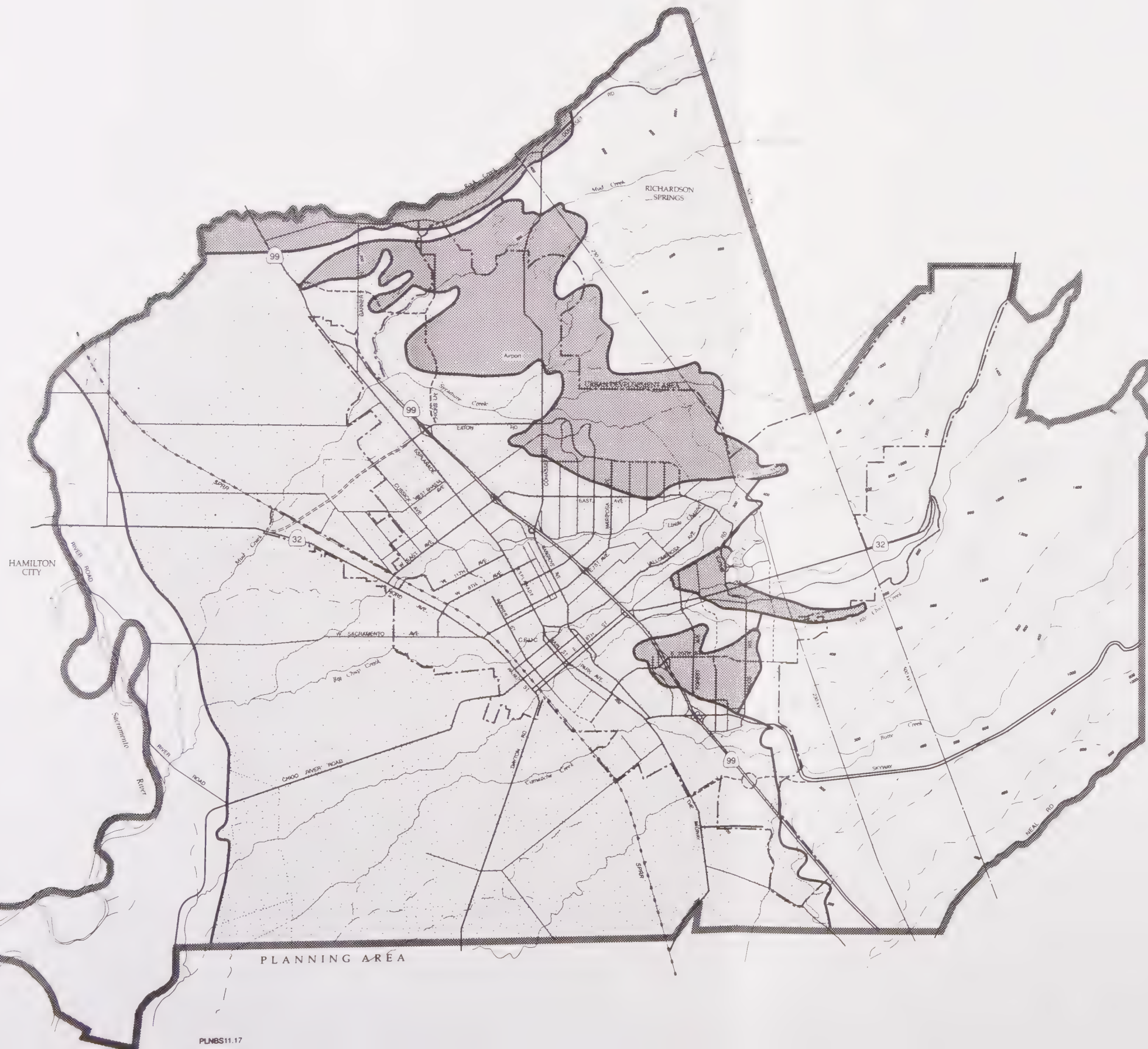
### **Implementing Policies: Seismic and Geologic Hazards**

- S-I-4 Continue requiring projects in areas that have highly expansive soils to undertake necessary studies and structural precautions as part of the project approval process. These areas are identified in Figure 8-2. Where prior soil studies on similarly-situated property, have been conducted, the City may waive the requirement for field work in order to avoid imposing unnecessary application costs.
- S-I-5 Continue requiring all new buildings in the City to be built under the seismic requirements of the Uniform Building Code.



# Expansive Soils

Figure 8-2



- Highly Expansive Soils
- Moderate to Highly Expansive Soils

Source: Michael Brandman Associates interpretation of U.S. Soil Conservation Service, *Report and General Soil Map*, Butte County, 1967.



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

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- S-I-6 Undertake a program to assess the risk posed by unreinforced masonry buildings in the City, including retrofitting costs and funding alternatives as part of the City's building inspection program; require retrofitting such buildings when significant risk is established by the assessment.

Because of the potential ground shaking associated with quakes along faults close to the Planning Area it is prudent that the risk posed by unreinforced masonry buildings in the City be assessed. Retrofitting would be required when occupancy changes were made that resulted in increased hazards to life and/or safety, such as conversion from retail to a nightclub or a restaurant use.

The City also could use zoning as an incentive to encourage retrofitting, and a Seismic Retrofit Ordinance could be adopted. For case studies of tools and funding alternatives being used by cities across California, refer to "*Seismic Retrofit Incentive Programs, A Handbook for Local Governments*," produced by the Association of Bay Area Governments in Oakland.

### 8.3 FIRE SERVICES

The Chico Fire Department and the Butte County Fire Department provide fire protection in the Planning Area. The Chico Fire Department operates four fire stations in the Chico area, and currently has plans to add two more stations. The Butte County Fire Department operates four stations in the Planning Area and one new fire station in west Chico is planned. Except for Upper Bidwell Park, there is a County fire station within seven minutes of any incorporated location in the Chico urban area. Detailed information relating to fire safety in the Planning Area is in *Master Environmental Assessment* Section 19.3; a summary of fire department capabilities and wildland fire hazards follows.

#### WILDLAND FIRES

Bidwell Park, the land surrounding it, and the foothills in the eastern Planning Area are the areas most prone to wildland fires. The City of Chico, Butte County, and the California Department of Forestry (CDF) consider these areas to be major fire threats. Each agency responds according to the location of the fire and mutual aid agreements. Besides City and County jurisdictional boundaries, there are also State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) in the eastern Planning Area. For these SRAs, the CDF is the leading responding agency in case of a fire.



Wildland fires often require special equipment, such as four wheel drive vehicles, to reach inaccessible areas that are typical of the eastern Planning Area. The City currently does not have specialized equipment specifically for wildland fires; it employs a combination of the standard City fire fighting equipment with forces of fire fighters doing work on the ground to effectively fight wildland fires.

CDF operates an Air Attack Base Station on property leased from the Chico Municipal Airport. This station assists ground crews in fighting wildland fires. It currently houses one federal airtanker and leases additional privately-owned tankers as necessary during the high fire risk season (approximately June-November). The station also houses an air attack (command) plane and a large mobile command post. Relocation of this facility has been discussed, but there are no current plans to move it within a specific time period.

### **Guiding Policies: Fire Services**

- S-G-3 Continue to provide high quality, effective and efficient fire protection services for Chico area residents.
- S-G-4 Minimize the loss of life and property resulting from the hazards of fire, medical and rescue emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and disaster response and recovery within the City and surrounding Planning Area.

### **Implementing Policies: Fire Services**

*See also Policies in Section 5.6: Resource-based Thresholds.*

- S-I-7 Maintain an average response time of four minutes or less for all proposed for urban development.
- S-I-8 Maintain mutual aid agreements with other agencies in Butte County, with the long-term objective of having a single emergency response agency for the Chico Urban Area.
- S-I-9 Work with the California Department of Forestry and Butte County Fire Department, on the feasibility of a watershed protection contract for the Bidwell Park area and other areas that are prone to wildland fires, to enhance city capabilities with tools such as air tankers and helicopters.



- S-I-10 Explore the possibilities of requiring automatic fire sprinklers for all new development that is not within 1½ miles of an existing or planned fire station (see Figure 8-3) and fire-resistive construction and compliance with California's high rise building requirements for buildings over three stories in height.
- S-I-11 Encourage the County to adopt and implement a weed abatement program in the unincorporated areas of the Chico Urban Area and to require mitigation to reduce wildland fire hazards.
- S-I-12 Encourage the County to require development in unincorporated and within the City's Sphere of Influence to conform to development standards within the City, including but not limited to Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code, water and street improvement standards.
- S-I-13 Develop standards to protect structures in wildland fire areas for inclusion in the *Best Practices Manual* or similar implementing program. These standards will include, for example, use of fire-resistant building and roofing materials, installation of fire-resistant landscaping, maximum road gradients, and clearance of vegetation proximate to structures.

## 8.4 LAW ENFORCEMENT

This segment of the Public Safety Element addresses law enforcement in the City of Chico. The policies contained in this section provide guidance for decision making when the City is confronted with specific law enforcement issues arising from changing community conditions. The action statements are intended to provide direction to the Police Department on how to implement Plan policies.

These policies are based on five assumptions:

- ▶ Community-oriented policing is the preferable approach to providing law enforcement services. Only through strong citizen involvement in the Police/Community partnership can this be realized;
- ▶ The underlying socioeconomic conditions conducive to crime and disorder can be affected by City actions directed at preserving and enhancing a sense of community;

- ▶ The Police can not be solely responsible for controlling and limiting crime and interpersonal conflicts; however, the Police will continue to be the primary agency capable of immediate response and crisis intervention;
- ▶ The uniformed Police Officer will continue to be a highly visible representative of City government; and
- ▶ The public will seek increased accountability of the Police in all aspects of law enforcement activities.

### **Guiding Policies: Law Enforcement**

- S-G-5 Provide a safe and secure environment for people and property in the community.
- S-G-6 Continue to provide community-oriented policing services that are responsive to citizen's needs.
- S-G-7 Increase and maintain public confidence in the ability of the Police Department to provide quality police services.
- S-G-8 Assist in crime prevention through physical planning and community design.

*See Community Design Element implementing policies for this guiding policy (CD-G-45 and CD-G-64).*

### **Implementing Policies: Law Enforcement**

- S-I-14 Provide rapid and timely response to all emergencies and maintain the capability to have minimum average response times.

Actions the Police Department will take to ensure rapid and timely response to all emergencies include:

- Analyze and monitor factors affecting response time (police staffing, community policing programs) and average response times as guidelines based on past experience;
- Provide training to certify personnel in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR);

Figure 8-3

Figure 8-3



- City Station
- Ⓟ Proposed City Station
- △ County Station
- △ County Volunteer Station

Note: 1.5 mile radius represents an average 4-minute response time. City and County stations serve larger areas.

Source: City of Chico, 1994; Blayney Dyett, 1994.



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- Maintain, train and equip special response teams for extraordinary or extremely hazardous emergency incidents.

S-I-15 Control and/or intervene in conduct recognized as threatening to life and property.

Actions the police department will take to help implement this policy include:

- Provide on-scene services to restore the peace and prevent further injury to life or property;
- Adopt a "Directed Patrol" approach, when appropriate, to focus on prevention;
- Identify evolving crime patterns, particularly those involving career criminals, and study methods to further enhance community-oriented policing;
- Enhance the department's crime scene investigation ability by the assignment of civilian employee(s) for this service as well as advanced officer training as a means of improving victim services; and
- Provide enhanced levels of service to victims of hate crimes.

S-I-16 Provide investigative services directed toward successful prosecution of criminal offenders.

Actions the Police Department will take to support successful prosecution of criminal offenders include:

- Provide for quality preliminary investigations and case management that will enhance the success of follow-up investigation and subsequent court presentation;
- Document factors that help the Department solve major crimes and monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the investigative process; and
- Continue and enhance the investigator/victim/witness relationship and maintain a cooperative liaison with the prosecuting attorney.

S-I-17 Reduce crime by strengthening the police/community partnership.

Actions the Police Department will take to strengthen relationships with the community include:

- Continue and enhance neighborhood-based crime prevention activities (Neighborhood Watch) and programs designed to reinforce positive juvenile behavior, prevent juvenile delinquency and encourage citizen involvement;
- Continue and enhance loss prevention programs in the commercial and industrial sectors;
- Continue and enhance programs designed to prevent and reduce drug and alcohol abuse, including joint education programs with City schools;
- Identify geographical areas or population groups experiencing noticeable crime victimization in order to improve effectiveness of crime prevention efforts and commit resources, as appropriate, to these areas to help them; and
- Evaluate the potential for a Police Athletic League or other variety of police/youth programs to allow further police/juvenile interaction and to offer a positive action alternative to children in our community.

S-I-18 Aid those who cannot care for themselves (intoxicated, addicted, mentally ill, physically disabled, the young, the old) and provide crisis intervention and conflict management, as appropriate.

Actions that the Police Department will take to further this aid include: maintaining a list of current community referral agencies; providing emergency transportation or commitment to medical, mental health or other appropriate facilities; and maintaining a liaison with social service agencies providing support to indigent persons and repeat juvenile offenders. The Department also will consider formation of a Sexual Assault Response Team program.

S-I-19 Assess community needs and expectations on an ongoing basis and report periodically to the City Council on citizen complaints and citizen commendations received.

S-I-20 Coordinate law enforcement planning with local, regional, state and federal plans.

Actions that will be taken to improve coordination with other public agencies include: establishing and maintaining liaison relationships and, as appropriate, agreements for mutual aid; participating in major disaster preparedness planning at all levels of government; and establishing and maintaining agreements for private security use.

## 8.5 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The City of Chico and Butte County both have adopted Emergency Plans which include prearranged emergency response procedures and mutual aid agreements for emergency assistance within the Planning Area. Section 11 of the *Master Environmental Assessment* provides details on emergency response capabilities in the Planning Area. A summary of key provisions follows.

Emergency routes for evacuation of Chico are Highway 99 and State Route 32 (see Figure 8-4). Specific routes within the urban area not designated in either the City of Chico or Butte County emergency plans, as they are identified at the time of the emergency event in response to the location, type and extent of incident.

**City of Chico Emergency Management Plan.** The objectives of the City of Chico Emergency Plan are to prepare for and facilitate coordinated and effective responses to emergencies within the City of Chico, and to provide adequate assistance to other jurisdictions as needed. This plan specifies actions for the coordination of operations, management and resources during emergencies; governmental responsibilities during emergency events; a plan for the organization of non-governmental organizations providing support assistance.

The California Master Mutual Aid Agreement, part of the Emergency Plan, calls for a shared response to an emergency from adjacent or area jurisdictions when the affected jurisdiction cannot adequately provide service by itself (e.g. City of Chico and Butte County). Mutual Aid assumes that the Director of Emergency Services has arranged mutual aid assistance agreements, through the proper channels, with Butte County, special districts and public utilities, local business and industry, and the American Red Cross. Mutual Aid assistance from the military is also available through the State Office of Emergency Services (OES) upon exhaustion of law enforcement resources when it is needed to supplement, but not substitute for local civil operations.

**Butte County Emergency Management Plan.** The Butte County Emergency Plan is designed to focus on potential large-scale disasters, rather than daily emergencies that are regularly handled by local law enforcement and protection agencies. This plan defines the County's planned response to "extraordinary" emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and nuclear defense operations. Evacuation routes are determined depending on the location, type, and extent of the emergency incident.

### **Guiding Policy: Emergency Management**

- S-G-9 Use the City's Emergency Plan as the guide for emergency management in the Planning Area.

### **Implementing Policies: Emergency Management**

- S-I-21 Maintain and update the City's Emergency Plan, designating emergency shelters and evacuation routes (see Figure 8-4).
- S-I-22 Promote greater community awareness and preparedness by working with business associations, homeowners' associations, community groups and utilities.
- S-I-23 Coordinate emergency drills with all affected operating departments including, City, and County Fire, Police, Public Works, Finance, Federal Aviation Agency, and Emergency Medical Services.
- S-I-24 Design critical public facilities to remain operative during emergencies.
- S-I-25 Plan and build a combination Fire Emergency Training Facility/Emergency Operating Center that is designed to remain after a maximum credible earthquake.



# Evacuation Routes

Figure 8-4



- Existing Evacuation Route
- Proposed Evacuation Route

Source: City of Chico, 1993.

25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

City of Chico  
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## **8.6 MISCELLANEOUS HAZARDS**

Three other hazards are notable in the Planning Area: agricultural spraying, electric and magnetic fields, and wind-shear and tornados.

### **AGRICULTURAL SPRAYING**

Several herbicides and insecticides which are classified by the State Department of Food and Agriculture (DFA) as potentially harmful to humans are used in the County. Although injuries from injurious agricultural chemicals are experienced predominantly in occupational situations (i.e., direct handling), some hazards to neighboring land uses may occur during application. For example, if crop-spraying adjacent to human-occupied urban uses occurs on a windy day, drift could create a hazard. Therefore, state law stipulates that such sprays shall not be applied within one mile of a residential area. Use of any of a list of hundreds of insecticides and herbicides which are classified as "injurious" by the DFA is prohibited without issuance of a permit.

The hazardous impacts of farming operations on urban uses can be minimized by using organic farming practices, switching to crops that produce fewer conflicts, or by maintaining buffer zones (on-farm or in the urban area, or by having a greenbelt between the agricultural and urban uses).

### **ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELDS**

#### **High Voltage Transmission Lines in the Planning Area**

Two sets of high voltage transmission lines traverse the eastern Planning Area. The "Central Valley Project" is a 230-kv power transmission line which does not serve the Planning Area transmission system. The PG&E Round Mountain/Table Mountain bulk power transmission system carries 500 kv, and, like the Central Valley Project, does not connect directly with the system serving the Planning Area. These transmission systems are the largest of the electric transmission facilities traversing the Planning Area. In addition, the City is served by a transmission system consisting of 60 kilovolt (kv) and 115 kv power lines, and seven substations are located within the Planning Area to distribute power.

#### **Health Hazards of Electric and Magnetic Fields**

Research conducted over the past decade has raised much debate over the health effects associated with electric and magnetic fields. Attention to this research, and the presence of such high voltage transmission lines in the Planning Area, has increased the awareness of the suspected, but unproven, threat of adverse health effects resulting from exposure to electric and



magnetic fields. Electric fields are produced in electrical lines, because of the amount of voltage applied to a conductor. Electric field strength falls off dramatically with distance, and many objects, including trees and houses shield electric fields. The predominant amount of residential exposure to electric fields is a result of household appliance use.

Magnetic fields are a result of the strength of the movement of electricity (current) through a conductor. As with electric fields, magnetic field strength decreases dramatically with distance from the source; this is especially true with appliances. Unlike electric fields, magnetic fields are not shielded by objects such as trees and buildings.

Exposure to electric and magnetic fields is typical in urban communities. Whether the fields originate from appliances or high voltage transmission lines, public and scientific concern exists regarding exposure and the potential for human health effects. The relationship between electric and magnetic fields exposure and health effects has yet to be scientifically proven; results from the laboratory and epidemiological studies that have taken place are conflicting and inconclusive. Scientists to date have not found threshold values, dose-response, or proven physiological causative relationships that demonstrate physical effects from electric and magnetic fields.

Under the recommendation of scientists in the field, several utility companies and some jurisdictions have addressed the electric and magnetic fields issue through a policy of prudent avoidance as the best way of limiting exposure to electric and magnetic fields. PG&E provides electric and magnetic fields information packets to the public that include information on the studies conducted on the subject. PG&E also provides electric and magnetic field measurement services at the public's request.

### **Setback Standards**

Although few agency standards address setbacks from electrical transmission lines, the State Department of Education, School Facilities planning division has established limits for locating school sites near high voltage power transmission line easements. These standards may be appropriate not only for locating schools, but also as applied to residential areas, child care facilities, and other uses where people are present for extended periods.

### **WIND-SHEAR AND TORNADOS**

In the last 10 years, citizens in Butte County have become increasingly concerned with severe weather conditions, specifically, tornados. While such weather conditions are inconceivable for many, in September of 1986, a tornado formed in Cottonwood, and headed south toward Chico, touching down in Vina, approximately 20 miles north of Chico. The tornado caused damage to fields, and one barn. Recently, within the last 6 months, two different tornados



were spotted along the perimeter of the City of Chico, as well as in Vina. The occurrence of tornados has encouraged meteorological studies related to local storm patterns, and the potential for future such storms to occur. However, despite the fact that tornados have occurred in the Planning Area, the magnitude of the storms in no way compares to the type of storms that occur in the midwestern United States.

### **Guiding Policy: Miscellaneous Hazards**

- S-G-10      Protect residents from the potential health dangers of electric and magnetic fields generated by power transmission lines and other sources, and hazards associated with agricultural spraying and wind-shear.

### **Implementing Policies: Miscellaneous Hazards**

- S-I-26      Monitor agricultural spraying adjacent to residential neighborhoods and pursue legal remedies to protect residents if violations of State standards occur that affect City residents.

*For policies related to urban/agriculture buffers, see Chapter 7: Open Space and Environmental Conservation, and Chapter 2: Community Design.*

#### **Electric and Magnetic Fields**

- S-I-27      Amend the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate review criteria, and where appropriate, provisions for homeowners and renter disclosure requirements and setbacks for uses adjacent to high voltage power transmission lines, including schools, parks, residential development, and child care facilities.
- S-I-28      Monitor research on the health effects of electric and magnetic fields, and take additional appropriate action, as warranted, to reduce hazardous exposure.

#### **Wind-shear**

- S-I-29      Establish in the Zoning Ordinance specific requirements to ensure that outdoor equipment and structures incorporate tie-down requirements where these may pose a threat to public safety in times of high winds or tornados.
- S-I-30      Work with PG&E to underground overhead utilities.









## 9 NOISE ELEMENT

The most significant noise sources in the Planning Area include Highway 99, State Route 32, and other heavily traveled roadways; the Southern Pacific Railroad; the Chico Municipal Airport; some industrial and commercial facilities; and, periodically, the Silver Dollar Speedway.

### 9.1 NOISE MEASUREMENT

Noise is "unwanted sound" and is known to have several adverse effects on people. For planning purposes, an A-weighted scale is used to describe environmental noise at any one particular time; however, community noise levels vary continuously. In order to account for the time-varying characteristics of noise, all of the individual noise readings must be averaged over a 24-hour period to give an equivalent level. This equivalent noise level, expressed as CNEL (Community Noise Equivalent Level) or  $L_{dn}$  (Day-Night Noise Level) can then be plotted on a map to illustrate average noise levels throughout the community. The CNEL or  $L_{dn}$  values represented on noise contour maps include an addition of 5 dBA for evening noise levels and 5 dBA for night-time levels within the 24-hour averages calculated.

The known effects of noise on people include hearing loss (not generally a factor with community noise), communication interference, sleep interference, physiological responses and annoyance. Detailed information on these effects and on noise terminology, measurement scales, and definitions of noise contours is in Section 12 of the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

### 9.2 NOISE COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS

From the known effects of noise, criteria have been established to help protect the public health and safety and prevent disruption of certain human activities. Noise compatibility standards, published by the California Office of Planning and Research, are shown in Table 9.2-1. They match each land use type with an appropriate range of noise levels. These standards should be used in conjunction with noise exposure contours shown on the noise maps (Figures 9-1 and 9-2) to determine where noise levels exceed the "normally acceptable" range and an acoustic report and noise mitigation will be required for development projects.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAW**

-- The Noise Element provides an understanding of existing and future noise conditions in the Planning Area, establishes a basis for evaluating potential noise level impacts on future development, and includes policy statements intended to guide public and private planning to attain and maintain acceptable noise levels. Implementation of the Noise Element is designed to promote a comprehensive and long range program of achieving acceptable noise levels throughout the Planning Area, and to increase the community's awareness of the need to control and reduce levels in areas of excessive noise.

The Noise Element is designed to ensure compliance with the Government Code. This Element has been prepared in quantitative terms, including maps showing noise contours of present and future noise levels.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS**

**Land Use Element.** Future noise contours were used as a guide for establishing a pattern of planned land uses as depicted on the General Plan Land Use Diagram that minimizes the exposure of community residents to excessive noise.





**Circulation Element.** Traffic volumes are one of the major Planning Area noise sources, and noise contours are based on existing and projected traffic volumes on the planned street system.

**Open Space Element.** Excessive noise can adversely affect enjoyment of recreational pursuits in designated open space, so noise exposure levels have been considered in planning for such open space uses. Open space also can be used to buffer sensitive land uses from noise sources through the use of setbacks and landscaping.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Detailed background information relating to noise is in Section 12 of the *Master Environmental Assessment* and in the Appendix to the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

**TABLE 9-1**  
**LAND USE COMPATIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY NOISE ENVIRONMENTS**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure Ldn or CNEL, dB						INTERPRETATION
	55	60	65	70	75	80	
Residential—Low Density Single Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes							 Normally Acceptable Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements
Residential— Multiple Family							
Transient Lodging— Motels, Hotels							
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes							 Conditionally Acceptable New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis for the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice.
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters							
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports							
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks							 Normally Unacceptable New construction or development should generally be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise insulation features included in the design.
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries							
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional							
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture							 Clearly Unacceptable New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.

Source: Office of Planning and Research, State of California General Plan Guidelines,  
 Appendix A: Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of the Noise Element of the General Plan, 1990.



### 9.3 EXISTING AND PROJECTED NOISE

A community noise survey was conducted for the General Plan to document noise exposure in areas containing noise sensitive land uses. For that purpose, noise sensitive land uses were considered to include residential areas, parks and schools. Noise monitoring sites were selected to be representative of typical conditions in the Planning Area; details are in Section 12 of the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

#### NOISE CONTOURS

In addition to the noise survey, noise contour maps were produced for the Planning Area. A "noise contour map" shows as closed lines those linear bands subject to similar average noise levels. Figure 9-1 depicts existing noise levels generated by traffic, the airport, and the railroad, while Figure 9-2 depicts future noise levels at General Plan buildout. The noise levels are expressed in  $L_{dn}$ , roughly equivalent to Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL). Appendix C includes tables showing specific distances for the 60 dB and 65 dB contours from the street centerline and the  $L_{dn}$  at 100 feet from the street centerline.

The 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour represents the level for which any new residential development that is not shielded generally will require mitigation to comply with noise standards. Contours along roadways represent the predicted noise level and do not reflect the mitigating effects of noise barriers, structures, topography, or vegetation. Because intervening structures, topography, and vegetation may significantly affect noise exposure at a particular location, the noise contours should not be considered site-specific, but rather are guides to determine when detailed acoustic analysis should be undertaken.

### 9.4 MAJOR PLANNING AREA NOISE SOURCES

This section summarizes current mobile noise sources, stationary noise sources, sensitive land uses, and current noise problems in the community. Details are in the *Master Environmental Assessment*.

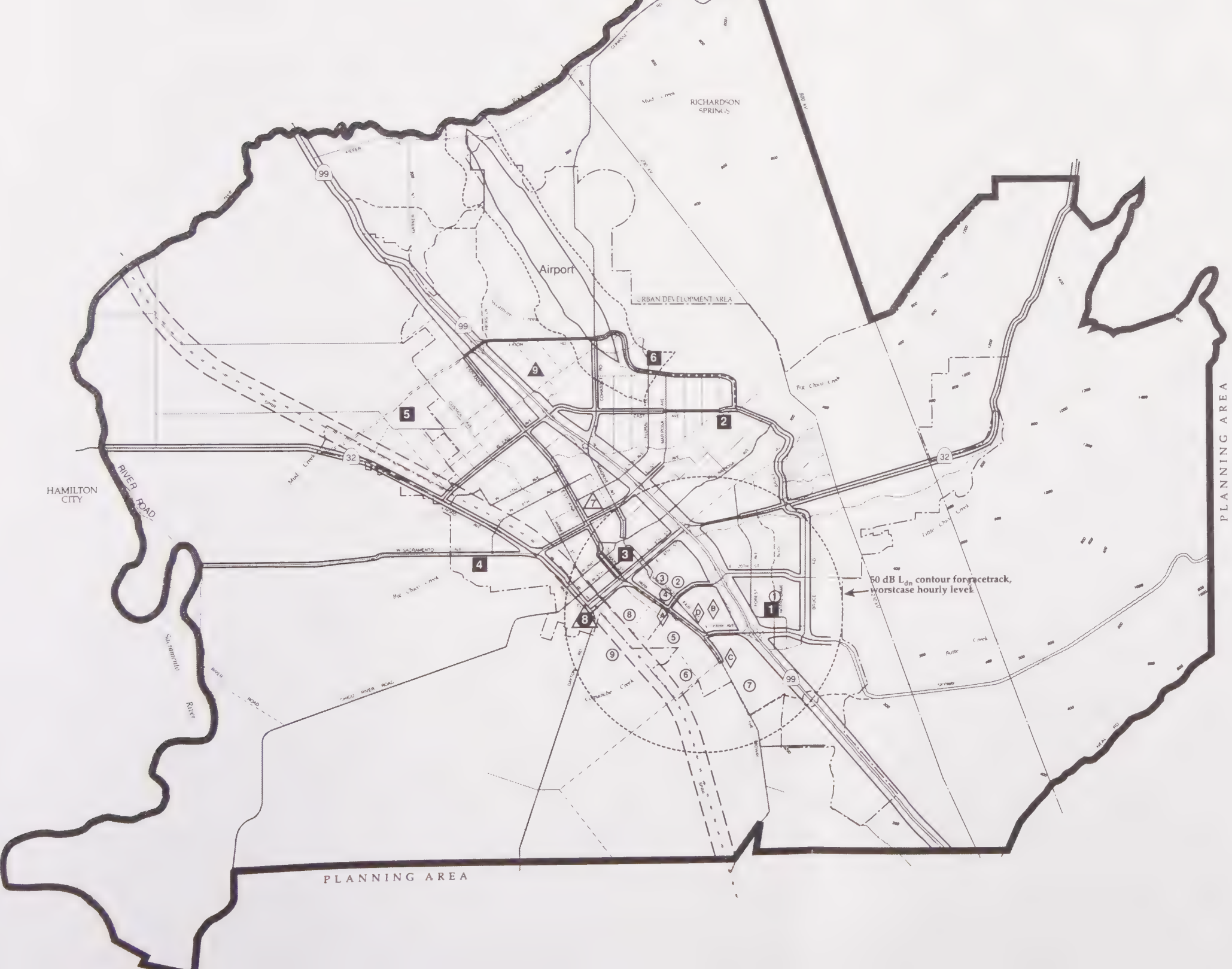
#### MOBILE NOISE SOURCES

**Traffic Noise.** Highway 99, State Route 32 and major arterials produce the most traffic noise, as might be expected. Most of the roadways for which noise contours were generated require at least 100 feet of unshielded setback for noise levels to diminish to less than 60 dB  $L_{dn}$ . Many of the built areas along travel corridors have setbacks of considerably less than 100



# Existing Noise

Figure 9-1



- Railroad 60 dB Ldn
- 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> Contour
- - - 55 dB L<sub>dn</sub> Contour
- Roadways where the 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> is less than 100 feet from the centerline
- 3 Short-Term Community Noise Monitoring Site
- △ Continuous Community Noise Monitoring Site
- 9 Roadway 24-hour Noise Monitoring Site
- 8 Railroad Noise Monitoring Site
- ① Short-Term Community Noise Monitoring Site/Silver Dollar Raceway
- ◇ Continuous Community Noise Monitoring Site/Silver Dollar Raceway

Notes: Tables in the Appendix depict noise contour data expressed as the distance (in feet) from the center of the roadway to L<sub>dn</sub> contours.  
Existing roadway noise is based on 1993 traffic network data, and existing airport noise is based on 1990 operations data.

Sources: Brown-Buntin Associates, February 1993; McClintock, Becker, & Associates, FAR Part 150, Airport Noise Compatibility Program: Aircraft Noise Exposure Map Report, December 7, 1992.





# Future Noise

Figure 9-2



— 60 dB L<sub>dn</sub> Contour  
- - - 55 dB L<sub>dn</sub> Contour

Notes: Railroad noise assumed to be the same as existing conditions.

Source: Michael Brandman Associates, May 1994.



25  
acres

0 4,000' 8,000'

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feet, and residents or employees within this noise impact area may thus be subject to significant noise levels. Shielding can offer some attenuation, so actual noise levels at specific sites may be less than projected.

Figures 9-1 and 9-2 show that the predicted distance to the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  contour along the railroad tracks is close to 600 feet, assuming that warning horns are used, and that no shielding is provided. The  $L_{dn}$  at 50 feet from the tracks exceeds 75 dB  $L_{dn}$ .

**Airport Noise.** Around the Chico Municipal Airport, some residential areas are subject to noise levels of 55 to 50 dB CNEL. These are located at either end of the runways beyond the airport property. Noise generated by aircraft at the Ranchero Airport does not have a significant effect on residential areas.

**Enloe Hospital Flightcare Helicopter Operations Noise.** The Enloe Hospital, located at the northeast corner of the Esplanade and East 5th Avenue, has a helipad that is used for the Flightcare Helicopter. The limited number of operations has not significantly increased ambient noise levels; depending on the altitude of the helicopter, single event noise levels ranged between 80 and 96 dB.

## STATIONARY NOISE SOURCES

Stationary noise sources within the Planning Area include industrial facilities, commercial facilities, and the Silver Dollar Speedway. Noise exposure within industrial facilities are controlled by employee health and safety regulations (OSHA and Cal-OSHA), but exterior noise levels are not similarly regulated by the federal and state governments. Noise generation from fixed sources may vary based on climatic conditions, time of day, and existing ambient noise levels. Specific characteristics of these sources are noted below.

**Park Avenue Industrial Area.** Ambient noise levels in the vicinity of light industrial and commercial facilities along Park Avenue are dominated by roadway traffic noise during the daytime and nighttime hours. Typical noise sources include truck traffic, loading dock activities, refrigeration trucks, banging of metal-on-metal, and HVAC systems.

**Silver Dollar Speedway.** The Silver Dollar Speedway, outside City limits, conducts stock car and sprint car races from March through October. Noise monitoring indicates that worst-case maximum noise levels associated with racing activities range between 55 and 70 dB at approximately 3,000 feet to the north of the race track.

**20th Street Industrial Area.** Noise associated with light industrial and commercial uses located adjacent to 20th Street, west of Highway 99, includes truck traffic, air handling systems and loading dock activities.

**Airport Industrial Area.** Noise levels around the Western Wood lumber mill operations — considered to represent worst case noise levels within the industrial area — range between 58 and 98 dB at the property lines.

**The Esplanade Industrial Area.** Typical of noise producing facilities located adjacent to The Esplanade industrial area is the conveyor belt and hopper at the Pleasant Valley Ready Mix where the measured noise was 66 dB  $L_{eq}$  at a distance of 300 feet.

**Chico Nut Company.** At the Chico Nut Company, located on The Esplanade, the most notable noise sources are truck traffic, cyclones, and air handling systems.

### **SENSITIVE LAND USES**

Land uses identified in Chico as noise-sensitive include residences of all types, nursing homes, day care centers, hospitals, schools, parks, and places of religious assembly. Outside the City, Butte County considers the Butte Ecology Conservation Center and wildlife management areas as noise sensitive areas.

The 1993 Community Noise Survey results indicate that typical noise levels in noise-sensitive portions of the Planning Area are in the range of 47 dB to 74 dB  $L_{dn}$ . This noise comes from traffic on Highway 99 and other heavily-traveled roadways, railroad line operations, and neighborhood activities, with the highest measured  $L_{dn}$  located adjacent to the railroad tracks (based on existing railroad operations). In general, most portions of the Planning Area which contain noise-sensitive uses are relatively quiet.

### **CURRENT NOISE PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY**

According to the Chico Police Department, residents complain about excessive noise related to two events.

- ▶ **Party Disturbances.** These can include loud music, loud talking/yelling, traffic noises, fighting, and other noises which are a distraction from the general peace.
- ▶ **Vehicle Noise.** This complaint is most often associated with loud audio equipment which is audible to citizens located at significant distance from the source.

## 9.5 POLICIES

### Guiding Policies: Noise Element

- N-G-1 Protect public health and welfare by eliminating existing noise problems where feasible, by establishing standards for acceptable indoor and outdoor noise, and by preventing significant increases in noise levels.
- N-G-2 Incorporate noise considerations into land use planning decisions, and guide the location and design of transportation facilities to minimize the effects of noise on adjacent land uses.

### Implementing Policies: Noise Element

#### Noise Standards and Requirements

- N-I-1 Use the "normally acceptable" noise levels for new land uses as established in Table 9.2-1 (Noise and Land Use Compatibility) as review criteria.
- N-I-2 Condition approval of all new development in residential areas with an actual or projected exterior noise level of greater than 60 dB CNEL on the use of noise mitigation measures to reduce exterior sound levels in those residential areas to less than or equal to 60 dB CNEL.

The Uniform Building Code, states that "Interior community noise levels (CNEL) with windows closed, attributable to exterior sources, shall not exceed an annual CNEL or  $L_{dn}$  of 45 dB in any habitable room." This standard is to apply to all new hotels, motels, apartment houses, and dwellings other than single-family detached dwellings. State law also requires noise insulation of new multifamily dwellings constructed within the 60 dB CNEL noise exposure contours.

- N-I-3 Where noise mitigation measures are anticipated to be needed based on a review of a project in relation to Table 9.2-1, require that project applicants secure the services of a qualified acoustical engineer to perform a detailed technical study and to design mitigation measures.
- N-I-4 Where site conditions permit, require noise buffers along the Southern Pacific railroad alignments for all new adjoining developments that are subject to unacceptable noise levels.

- N-I-5 Assist in enforcing compliance with noise emissions standards for all types of vehicles, established by the California Vehicle Code and by federal regulations, through coordination with the Chico Police Department, Butte County Sheriff's Department, and the California Highway Patrol.
- N-I-6 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include ambient noise standards and performance requirements to minimize noise exposure in all zoning districts, consistent with Table 9.2-1.
- N-I-7 In making a determination of impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), consider an increase of four or more DBA to be "significant" if the resulting noise level would exceed that described as normally acceptable for the affected land use in Table 9.2-1.
- N-I-8 Conduct site-specific railroad noise studies for noise sensitive projects anticipated to be affected by railroad noise. Generalized railroad noise contours are shown on Figures 9-1 and 9-2 and serve as "triggers" indicating where future study is advisable.

#### **Noise Monitoring and Updating**

- N-I-9 Continue to project and monitor noise levels using traffic projections and periodic noise monitoring.
- N-I-10 Verify projected noise levels with noise monitors at locations adjacent to residential and other noise sensitive areas where traffic volumes increase by more than 50 percent from 1993 baseline noise data.
- N-I-11 Implement a noise abatement program. Designate a staff person trained in on-site measurement techniques to perform on-site testing of noise sources, assist other departments in applying policies congruent with community noise standards, process complaints, collect and disseminate authoritative information on the effects of noise and noise control throughout the community, and enforce the provisions of the City of Chico Noise Ordinance.



### Methods of Attenuation

- N-I-12 Control noise at the source through use of insulation, berms, building design and orientation, buffer yards, staggered operating hours, and other techniques; where necessary, use noise barriers to attenuate noise to acceptable levels; require that barriers are landscaped to reduce negative visual impacts on the community.
- N-I-13 Encourage noise attenuation programs that avoid visible sound walls, where practical. Open space, parking, accessory buildings, frontage roads and landscaping can be used to buffer development from noise.

*See policies related to neighborhood conservation and design in Chapter 2: Community Design.*

- N-I-14 Request Caltrans to provide freeway sound walls adjacent to residential areas where existing noise levels exceed 67 dB, consistent with State standards and Caltrans' priorities for community noise abatement.
- N-I-15 In conjunction with roadway link improvements that significantly increase traffic capacity, noise attenuation devices shall be implemented to reduce impacts to acceptable levels, as practicable.

### Coordination with Others

- N-I-16 Work with the Butte County Airport Land Use Commission to update the ALUC Plan contours around the Ranchero Airport.
- N-I-17 Work with the State to reduce noise levels associated with events at the Silver Dollar Speedway.



# PART IV

## HOUSING











## 10 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICIES

### BACKGROUND

The Housing Element consists of policies and programs contained in this chapter, and background information and analysis, as required by state law in Appendix D. Minor changes have been made to the policies and programs of the adopted and HUD—certified 1992 Housing Element to ensure consistency with the other elements of the General Plan.

The City of Chico adopted a Housing Element in 1992. Technical information included in the 1992 Housing Element also is contained in the 1993 *Master Environmental Assessment* prepared for the Chico General Plan. The City's Housing Strategy, Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs (1992-97), which are Sections I(2) to I(4) of the 1992 Housing Element, are incorporated in this section of the General Plan, so all Plan policies are in one document. A Summary of Findings of the 1992 Housing Element also is included for easy reference.

### **PURPOSE AND RELATION TO STATE LAW**

State requirements for housing elements are more detailed and exacting than for any other general plan element. California Government Code sections 65580 through 65589 require that housing elements contain:

- ▶ An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs;
- ▶ A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relevant to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing; and
- ▶ A program that sets forth a five-year schedule of actions that the local government is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement the policies to achieve the goals and objectives of its housing element.

As required by State law, Chico's 1992 Housing Element identifies residential sites adequate to accommodate a variety of housing types for all income levels, analyzes governmental constraints to housing maintenance, improvement and development, addresses conservation and improvement of the condition of the existing affordable housing stock, and outlines policies to promote housing opportunities for all persons.



## **10.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF 1992 HOUSING ELEMENT**

### **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

The City of Chico population increased from 26,603 in 1980 to 40,079 in 1990, which is a 51 percent rate of growth. The growth in the Urban Area was 24 percent during the same period (58,319 to 72,526). The City grew at a faster rate due to political decisions limiting development to larger parcels which can facilitate septic systems.

**Age Characteristics.** The City of Chico has a relatively young population with a median age of 24.6 years compared to the state median age of 31.5 years. The age group 15-24 years accounts for 35 percent of the City's population and 27 percent in the Urban Area. The presence of the California State University and the Community College are the primary reasons for this situation.

**Ethnic Population.** The City's population is predominantly white with only 11 percent of the population identified as non-white. The ethnic composition of the City and Urban Area has remained constant over the last ten years except for the Asian and Pacific Islander group which increased from 355 persons in 1980 to 1,602 persons in 1990 ( a 351 percent increase).

**Student Population.** The student population is a significant group in the City and the Urban Area. The 1990 Census reports that between the California State University and the Community College, 14,500 students live in the City and 19,973 live in the Urban Area. The City defines the student population as persons between 18 and 24 years of age who have located in the Chico Urban Area to attend school. The housing needs of this group are different than the general population in that shared housing by unrelated individuals is the most common household type. In addition, it is very common for students to overpay (as a percent of income) for housing.

### **TENURE**

The City has a home ownership rate of 33 percent compared to 56 percent for the state, reflecting its large student population. The rate has declined since 1970. The 1990 Census reports that 47 percent of the City's housing stock is single family units and approximately 30 percent of the single family stock is rented. The rental market is a very mobile market evidenced by the fact that of the 21,000 households that reported they had moved into their unit after 1985, 75 percent were renters.

## **AFFORDABILITY**

The affordability in the rental market is summed up very distinctly by the 1990 Census reporting that for the 9,789 renter households earning less than \$20,000 (the median household income is \$19,095) 6,926 (71 percent) were paying more than 35 percent of their income for rent. For the 4,583 very low income households, earning less than \$10,000, the number paying more than 35 percent of their income for rent was 3,984 (87 percent). The application of the overpayment to single family mortgages is less direct because of the tax advantages of mortgage interest. For the very low income category, 371 (49 percent) out of 756 households were paying more than 35 percent of their income on a mortgage. For the group between 50 percent of the median and the median, the percentage paying over 35 percent was 32 percent.

## **NEW UNIT CONSTRUCTION**

**Single Family.** The construction of single family units has been increasing at a relatively constant pace since 1980. Variations occurred in response to interest rate fluctuation and other market changes. A total of 1,726 single family units were built during the period 1981 to 1991.

**Multi-Family.** The new construction of multi-family units has fluctuated dramatically. During 1990, only 123 units were constructed. In 1991, 849 units were built. The 1991 production caused the multi-family vacancy rate to rise from 2 percent to 6 percent. Multi-family construction is more dependent on the economy than single family construction. Currently builders are unable to secure construction financing and very little multi-family construction is expected until the recession ends. This could result in the vacancy rate falling again.

## **BELOW MARKET HOUSING PRODUCTION**

**Single Family.** The City has worked with the local nonprofit housing agency to produce affordable home purchase opportunities for lower income families through self-help housing programs. Unfortunately the number of units is small, only 20 per year on average during the last three years. The private sector is still unable to build single family homes for less than \$110,000, except in very limited numbers. The average price for the entry level market is between \$115,000 and \$135,000. The future ability to produce affordable single family homes is a definite goal and the City is pursuing a variety of techniques to assist the developers.

**Multi-Family.** The ability to produce affordable rental housing varies by the targeted rent levels. The private market is able to produce rental housing affordable to households earning above 80 percent of the median income. Many of the existing rental units are affordable to households earning over 70 percent of the median income and this could continue if the vacancy rate remains at or above 5 percent. The strong unmet need is for units affordable to households earning 50 percent or less of the local median income. To produce units for this group, federal and/or state housing program assistance is a necessity. The City's resources are simply not sufficient. The trend is to reduce the level of funding available at the State and Federal level which will reduce the City's ability to target the very low income households.

### REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

All the characteristics mentioned above come together in the Regional Housing Allocation Plan for the City. The Plan is produced by the Butte County Association of Governments and is for the period 1991-1997. The Plan projects housing unit production needs and distributes the need by four income levels. The Plan for the City is:

	<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Lower</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Above Moderate</b>	<b>Total</b>
Goal 1991-1997	1,033	771	872	1,485	4,161
Annual Goal	148	110	125	212	595

The City is attempting to increase the homeownership rate from the current 33 percent to 40 percent by 1997. Based on this goal, the quantified objectives by tenure are:

	<b>Very Low Rent/Own</b>	<b>Lower Rent/Own</b>	<b>Moderate Rent/Own</b>	<b>Above Moderate Rent/Own</b>	<b>Total Rent/Own</b>
1991-1997	1,033/0	694/77	610/262	149/1,336	2,486/1,675
Annual	148/0	99/11	87/38	21/191	355/239

As mentioned above, the ability of the City to meet these goals is a function of local efforts through the programs detailed in this element, the performance of the local, state, and federal economies, and the commitment of the state and federal governments to provide additional financial resources for the lower and very low income households.

## **10.2 THE CITY'S HOUSING STRATEGY**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY**

Recognizing that the economic and physical constraints mentioned are largely beyond a local jurisdiction's influence, the City is designing its strategy to maximize the use of its own resources.

The City has set up a Housing Office. The City will Concentrate its available housing resources within this office. The Housing Office staff will administer the LMIHF and the CDBG Programs. In addition, staff will apply for funding from the state and federal governments when it is available and does not conflict with ongoing procedures.

The City not only recognizes the need for housing programs, but it is aware that such programs cannot be effectively integrated into the duties of general administrative staff.

### **CAPITALIZING LOCAL RESOURCES**

The City, through the RDA, has issued a \$25 million bond with 20% of the proceeds going into the LMIHF. The bond has been structured so that the proceeds can be drawn down over a five year period. This strategy will result in \$7 million available for the LMIHF over the 5 years (1992-1997).

The debt service of the bond issuance is significant, but will not obligate the entire current tax increment. In fact, the expenditures by the RDA for public improvements and business assistance projects are scheduled to sufficiently increase the increment for the LMIHF in the near future to cover the bond's debt service.

### **LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

One of the City's highest priorities is to work with other RDA's in the State to bring about legislative changes that will return discretion of the LMIHF to the community. Specific legislative changes that need to be accomplished as soon as possible are:

- ▶ Remove the constraints on the LMIHF that make it impractical to provide public improvements to existing low income neighborhoods. The requirements that the owner of a site which is assisted with LMIHF must enter into an agreement to provide or maintain housing affordable to low and moderate income households is unworkable in an existing neighborhood.



- ▶ The recent legislative change that restricts an RDA from land banking a parcel for more than 5 years is another obstacle to local efforts. Many low income housing projects take 3 to 5 years to develop. The typical low income housing project includes funding from State, federal and local agencies. The inclusion of low income housing tax credits is also common. To be able to take advantage of these programs, the community must have sites and time. Land is a finite resource and its price is escalating.

Similarly, RDA's are responsible for efforts to promote a jobs-housing balance. To be effective in this the RDA needs housing sites for the employees of the firms the City is recruiting.

### 10.3 HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS (1992-1997)

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The number system has not been changed to ensure consistency with the adjusted element. The text has been edited to maintain a consistent expression of policies, consistent with other elements. (e.g., use of active verbs, elimination of "The City shall...").

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#### GOAL # 1

To provide equal housing opportunity and access for chico citizens regardless of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital/family status or handicap. Protected classes as defined by law shall be covered by this provision.

#### Objectives: Equal Opportunity

- (a) Encourage and support the enforcement of laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination in lending practices and in the sale or rental of housing.
- (b) Remove regulatory constraints that impede equal opportunity to housing in the City.

**Policies: Equal Opportunity**

- 1.1 Cooperate with non-profit organizations and other agencies to ensure equal opportunity and access to housing for all residents.

**Programs: Equal Opportunity**

- 1 Provide a process for the resolution of allegations regarding housing discrimination by continuing to refer such actions to Legal Services of Northern California, the responsible local agency.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: CDBG; Time: On-going;  
Projected Units: N/A.

- 2 In conjunction with Legal Services, provide workshops for tenants and landlords concerning Fair Housing and other relevant issues. In addition , flyers, press releases, official proclamations, and other activities will be conducted to maintain a high profile for Fair Housing.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: CDBG; Time: On-going;  
Projected Units: N/A.

- 3 Coordinate efforts between BCHA and the City to further equal opportunity efforts.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: CDBG; Time: On-going;  
Projected Units: N/A.

**GOAL # 2**

To provide housing affordable to all economic segments of the community.

**Objectives: Affordability**

- (c) Encourage more efficient use of land, public services and facilities which result in reduced development costs and affordable housing.
- (d) Promote the development and conservation of lower cost multiple-family development.

- (e) Strive to achieve economical and efficient development which produces quality, affordable housing.
- (f) Encourage development incentives that result in production of below-market rate housing.

**Policies: Affordability**

- 2.1 Facilitate the use of federal and state programs which can assist in the development of new or purchase/rental of existing affordable housing.
- 2.2 Consider permitting second units in new and existing single family neighborhoods.
- 2.3 Continue to encourage the types of housing desired by households whose incomes are above the area's median household income.
- 2.4 Facilitate the utilization of innovative programs and approaches to providing housing at affordable costs. Programs that should be continued or pursued include: self-help housing, cooperative housing projects, co-housing, off-site constructed housing, and City provided technical assistance.
- 2.5 Develop and implement regulatory action that will advance the production of affordable units.
- 2.6 In special situations, waive or reduce development fees for projects affordable to very low and low income households.
- 2.7 Continue to assist residential development by providing current land use and zoning information to the public.
- 2.8 Continue to view density bonus provisions as a useful tool for creating below market rate housing.
- 2.9 Strive to maintain residentially designated and zoned sites within the urban area, particularly those appropriate for medium and high density residential development by discouraging incremental rezoning and/or General Plan amendments, which reduce readily or moderately developable sites below that needed to provide for the regional housing allocation and a surplus acreage of 20 percent to permit market forces to operate.

**Programs: Affordability**

- 4 Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of permitting second units within all residential zones. Any ordinance to allow second units should impose development standards which may include, but not be limited to, any of the following:
  - a. Require owner-occupancy of main or second unit.
  - b. Restrict the number of second units within neighborhood area or by block.
  - c. Limit the maximum size and number of bedrooms.
  - d. Require off-street parking for second units to be adjacent to alleys, where such facilities exist. In areas not developed with alleys, on-site tandem parking should be considered. On-street parking for the second unit may be considered where it is not feasible to meet required parking on-site and existing street improvements and the level of on-street parking use in the area permit such consideration.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 20.

- 5 Prepare and consider an ordinance providing procedures for approving small lot subdivisions of 10 dwelling units or more where approval involves an increase in density above the maximum density permitted by the parent zoning district. The purpose of such an ordinance shall be to encourage developers to provide owner-occupied residential units affordable to households with gross incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median family income.

This ordinance may include, but need not be limited to, any of the following provisions:

- a. Review and approval is granted through an expedited process, such as a one-step planned development procedure.
- b. Minimum subdivision size is 10 units or more.
- c. A mixture of housing types and sizes is encouraged.



- d. A minimum of 10 percent of the proposed units are required to be affordable to the targeted households.
- e. The architectural style of affordable units shall be compatible with the exterior appearance of the housing units in the subdivision and, to the extent practical, dispersed throughout the subdivision.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 20.

- 6 Implement State statutes regarding provisions for specialized housing and programs, such as density bonuses, second units and off-site constructed housing.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time:  
1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 7 Develop residential standards which encourage more use of cluster and mixed use development which provides higher density, efficient use of development and land best suited for preserving the area's natural resources.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1994; Projected Units: N/A.

- 8 Explore feasibility of amending Titles 18 and 19 of the Municipal Code to allow duplexes on corner lots within all single family subdivisions as a permitted use subject to compliance with specified standards such as those noted below:

- a. Maximum lot size shall be 10,000 square feet.
- b. Duplex units shall be architecturally compatible with surrounding residences as to bulk, scale, height, exterior materials and provision of garages.
- c. Duplex units shall comply with development standards of overlaying zoning district, except as noted in these provisions.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1994; Projected Units: 20.

- 9 Prepare and maintain a current inventory of vacant residentially designated and zoned parcels and the development potential of such parcels, along with a list of the current status of development projects in the City. This information shall be available to the public and updated at least twice annually.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: On-going; Projected Units: N/A.

- 10 Revise zoning and land use regulations and subdivision ordinance subsequent to adoption of the General Plan, to develop regulations which promote affordable housing while meeting other goals and objectives of the community.

**Assignment:** Planning Division/CSD; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1994-1995; Projected Units: N/A.

- 11 Study the feasibility of increasing the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund set-a-side of the RDA tax increment from the existing 20 percent to 30 percent to generate 50 percent additional funds for low and moderate income housing projects community wide.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/RDA; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1993-1994; Projected Units: 100.

- 12 Study producing additional rental units affordable to very low and low income households by subsidizing owners of existing vacant units. Participating property owners will be required to restrict the unit while the household being subsidized continues to reside in the unit. The initial phases will be to study the implications of redevelopment law and relocation law for the program.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/BCHA; Funding: LMIHF;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 20.

- 13 Ensure sufficient Article XXXIV authority is available for low income projects requiring it. Seek additional authority prior to or at such time that the number of authorized units remaining declines to fifty.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/City Attorney; Funding: LMIHF; Time:  
As necessary; Projected Units: N/A (essential to other programs).

- 14 Consider partnerships with both for profit and nonprofit developers whereby the City assumes an equity position, in contrast to a loan or grant, in order to leverage resources to a greater degree. When the City considers a proposal for housing assistance, this option will be explored. Its feasibility will depend on the type of project and other funding available.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: LMIHF; Time: On-going;  
Projected Units: 100.

### **GOAL # 3**

To ensure a balanced rate of growth between housing production, employment and provision of services.

#### **Objectives: Balanced Growth**

- (g) Ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available as jobs increase.
- (h) To the extent feasible, balance employment opportunities with the provision of housing. Promote housing types which enable persons to live and work in Chico.

#### **Policies: Balanced Growth**

- 3.1 Provide for infrastructure and service demands, including sanitary sewers, storm drainage, street improvements, utilities, schools and park facilities, generated by residential development in advance or at the time such development occurs.

#### **Programs: Balanced Growth**

- 15 Subsequent to comprehensive review, amend the City's Design Criteria and Improvement Standards which result in excessive cost without providing necessary benefits. Amend the standards to reflect current cost saving materials and technology. Standards should only be modified in consideration of:
- a. Ensuring that the change does not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare.

- b. Long term maintenance costs versus short term saving.
- c. City versus property owner liability.

**Assignment:** Building Division/Planning Division/Engineering Division; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: (1992-1993); Projected Units: N/A.

#### **GOAL # 4**

To encourage a diversity of housing opportunities that satisfy the physical, social and economic needs of all Chico residents.

##### **Objectives: Diversity**

- (i) Ensure adequate land for housing construction to meet future needs.
- (j) Assist in the provision of housing for residents with special needs.
- (k) Promote the continued maintenance and enhancement of residential areas, both in terms of housing and public facilities.
- (l) Seek to provide emergency shelter for persons temporarily in need of such housing.

##### **Policies: Diversity**

- 4.1 Encourage the development of lower-cost housing in new and existing single family developments.
- 4.2 Promote a mix of dwelling types and sizes in new residential areas; discourage the formation of new residential areas having a uniform housing type and size throughout.
- 4.3 Encourage adoption of a variety of mechanisms designed to assist the elderly to remain housing independent, such as shared-equity programs, co-housing, etc.
- 4.4 Seek and encourage the development of affordable housing for single-headed households.



- 4.5 Recognize the importance of and need to temporarily house the homeless and others in crisis situations.
- 4.6 Provide programs for identifying and developing adequate sites for emergency shelters and transitional housing.

**Programs: Diversity**

- 16 Encourage development of a variety of housing options for the elderly by providing funding support and application of modified development standards reflecting the specific needs of the elderly in housing. Where specific standards are applied to housing development for the elderly, restrictions should be adopted to prohibit its conversion to non-senior use.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff/HUD Section 202/LMIHF/ other State and Federal Programs; Time: On-going; Projected Units: 100.

- 17 Investigate the opportunity to develop Single Room Occupancy (SRO) or other types of housing affordable to low-income elderly and other low-income households convenient to transportation and other support services. This program will require that an SRO ordinance and/or amendment of the City land use regulations be drafted for consideration.

**Assignment:** Planning Division/Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff/HUD Section 202/RDA/LMIHF / other State and Federal Programs as available; Time: 1993; Projected Units: 100.

- 18 Provide technical assistance to organizations and individuals interested in development of elderly housing.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: On-going; Projected Units: N/A.

- 19 Amend the City Land Use Regulations to establish an overlay zone for emergency shelters. The overlay zone shall identify areas where such facilities may be developed and operated as permitted uses subject to conformance with specified development standards, pertaining to aspects of site development as mentioned below.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 20 Amend the City Land Use Regulations to stipulate emergency shelter development standards. Development standards should include but not be limited to:

- a. Size of facility
- b. Off-site parking
- c. Security lighting
- d. Proximity to residential zoned property
- e. Concentration of such facilities within each overlay area.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 21 Amend the City Land Use Regulations to add transitional housing use. This use shall be defined and permitted in the R-3 High Density Residential District and all commercial zones with a conditional use permit. The purpose of this use permit will be to address those criteria and concerns typical of the use permit process without requiring a more rigorous review than for other uses granted by use permit.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 22 Assist other agencies and/or groups interested in developing emergency shelters or transitional housing facilities and programs.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: On-going; Projected Units: 50.

- 23 Provide an inventory of accessible and adaptable units to all agencies assisting the handicap to obtain appropriate housing. The inventory shall be updated and distributed annually and contain the apartment name and address and the number of total accessible and adaptable units.

**Assignment:** Building Division/Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: On-going beginning January, 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 24 Assist persons in need of accessible units and/or information on the City's ability to fund rehabilitation of existing units to meet accessibility requirements.

**Assignment:** Building Division/Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff/Private Activity Bond Fee; Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

- 25 Provide funding assistance to disabled to modify existing units for accessibility through private activity bonds and Community Development Block Grant funds.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff/Private Activity Bond Fee; Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 30.

- 26 Use authority of the City and Butte County Housing Authority for the issuance of revenue bonds for financing residential development projects. Both single and multiple family housing are eligible for such funding. Issuance of bonds for multiple family development should be conditioned upon 20 percent of the units being available to very low income households, or 40 percent to low income households, and first floor units to be handicapped accessible. For the units restricted to very low and low income households, a maximum percentage of income which can be paid in rent shall be established.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: As Federal and State Legislation allows; Projected Units: 200.

- 27 Investigate a renter assistance program to assist households which cannot secure rental housing units because they lack ability to accrue required first, last and cleaning deposit funds.

**Assignment:** Non profit; Funding: LMIHF/CDBG; Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 50.

**GOAL # 5**

To conserve and upgrade the existing housing stock.

**Objectives: Conservation**

- (m) Maintain and enhance the character and affordable nature of Chico's older neighborhoods.
- (n) Minimize the loss of existing assisted units because of conversion to market rate units or physical deterioration.
- (o) Improve the condition of the City's existing housing.

**Policies: Conservation**

- 5.1 Seek cooperation from local lending institutions for financing improvements to older structures.
- 5.2 Continue to be committed to preserve its older neighborhoods through housing rehabilitation, compatible in-fill and redevelopment projects.
- 5.3 Endeavor through the development approval process to ensure that community character, housing quality and aesthetics are fostered.
- 5.4 Aggressively enforce compliance where code violations exist in residential structures, in order to maintain existing housing stock in a safe and habitable condition.

**Programs: Conservation**

- 28 Continue established policies that require affordability restrictions on assisted housing units and establish policies and procedures to preserve existing assisted units that are not subject to restrictions.
  - a. Restriction on the occupancy or sale of residences rehabilitated through Community Development Block Grant program to owner occupants or other lower income households, or require repayment of rehabilitation loans at the time of sale. All such units shall be restricted.



- b. Restriction on the occupancy or sale of residences purchased by households assisted through the MSP Program to owner occupants or other low/moderate income households, or require repayment of MSP loans at the time of sale. All such units shall be restricted.
- c. Restrictions on affordability of rental units assisted by the LMIHF for a minimum of 30 years.
- d. Restrictions on the conversion of multi-family units occupied by elderly households to condominium ownership. Units occupied by elderly households and converted to condominiums will be available to elderly households through a long term lease (5 year minimum), with the total number of units so reserved not required to exceed 20 percent of the units in the project. Relocation assistance shall be provided to all elderly households displaced by the conversion of units to condominium ownership.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: On-going; Projected Units: N/A.

- 29 Maintain a monitoring system and coordinate with the Butte County Housing Authority and local non-profit housing development organizations to preserve assisted housing units that are scheduled to be converted to market rate units in response to the expiration of assisted housing regulatory agreements with State or Federal housing agencies.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: LMIHF/ HOME/CDBG; Time: On-going; Projected Units: 100.

- 30 Continue the City's program for rehabilitating substandard owner-occupied residential units occupied by low income households qualifying under Federal guidelines.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: LMIHF/HOME/CDBG; Time: On-going; Projected Units: 50.

- 31 Beginning in 1993, obtain funding through the Home Investment in Affordable Housing (HOME) program and earmark such funds for rehabilitation of rental housing units which will, through agreement with the City, remain affordable to low income households for a minimum of 15 years.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: LMIHF/HOME/CDBG;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: 75.

- 32 Establish an on-going program to monitor and inventory housing condition in the Chico Urban Area.

**Assignment:** Building Division/Planning Division/Housing Office;  
Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: Annually; Projected  
Units: N/A.

- 33 Prepare an annual report to the Planning Commission and City Council by September 1, updating the status of the Housing Condition Survey and Inventory.

**Assignment:** Building Division/Planning Division/ Housing Office;  
Funding: City Funded Staff; Time: Annually; Projected  
Units: N/A.

- 34 Revise existing land use regulations incorporating standards for in-fill development within existing residential neighborhoods, which reduce conflicts resulting from, but not limited to, setbacks, building height, fencing and landscaping. In-fill standards shall provide for privacy of existing residences, to the extent feasible, through the use of landscape and/or fence screening, setbacks, building height and orientation of structures. The overall intent of the standards shall be to efficiently utilize in-fill parcels consistent with densities permitted by the General Plan while preserving neighborhood character.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1993-1994; Projected Units: N/A.

- 35 Consider implementing a neighborhood planning program, in conjunction with the General Plan update.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1992-1993; Projected Units: N/A.

## **GOAL # 6**

To promote homeownership opportunities for all economic sectors of the population.

**Objectives: Ownership**

- (p) Encourage the development of affordable housing for first-time homebuyers.

**Policies: Ownership**

- 6.1 Continue to allocate resources to assist low and moderate income households become homeowners.
- 6.2 Assist low and moderate income homeowners transition to a larger or safer unit when rehabilitation of their existing unit is impractical.
- 6.3 Support programs which enable the elderly to remain in their homes.
- 6.4 Increase homeownership of housing types other than conventional single family detached residences, such as attached single family units, duplexes, condominiums, second units, manufactured housing and equity cooperatives, by developing land use regulations and financial assistance programs which encourage such development.

**Programs: Ownership**

- 36 Promote homeownership through the Mortgage Subsidy Program for low and moderate income first-time homebuyers.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: LMIHF; Time: On-going;  
Projected Units: 75.

- 37 In conjunction with local non-profits, continue to develop local resources and apply for State and Federal funds, as appropriate, needed to offer Urban Self-Help program to lower income first-time homebuyers.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/Non profit; Funding: State  
HCD/CHFA/LMIHF; Time: On-going; Projected  
Units: 50.

- 38 Assist homeowners who need larger or safer units and rehabilitation of their existing unit is impractical.

**Assignment:** Housing Office; Funding: CDBG/HOME;  
Time: On-going; Projected Units: 5-10.

- 39 Establish alternative financing options for low/moderate income homebuyers, such as equity sharing by private investors, creation of local community bank and/or local lender fund pooling to reduce risk.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/Local Banks and Savings & Loan;  
Funding: Private Sector; Time: 1992-1994; Projected  
Units: N/A (funding to assist other programs).

- 40 Encourage counseling on the responsibility of homeownership and debt management, home loan information and house analysis.

**Assignment:** Local non-profits/Property management organizations;  
Funding: CDBG/HOME; Time: On-going; Projected  
Units: N/A.

- 41 Consider a land trust program which combines land banking and improvements as the City's equity share with a local non-profit organization constructing units and/or supervising self-help projects. Land cost and improvements will be discounted to reduce the price of the house and thus buy down payment and mortgage amounts.

**Assignment:** Housing Office/Non profit; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: On-going; Projected Units: N/A.

## **GOAL # 7**

To encourage the conservation of energy in all residential development.

### **Objective: Energy Conservation**

- (q) Reduce long-term housing costs through planning and applying energy conservation measures.

### **Policies: Energy Conservation**

- 7.1 Increased application of active and passive solar energy systems shall be encouraged in residential development.



- 7.2 Continue to enforce energy standards required by the State Energy Building Regulations for residential development.

**Programs: Energy Conservation**

- 42 Coordinate with Pacific Gas and Electric Company to ensure that the public is informed of all available programs providing incentives for the installation of energy conserving measures.

**Assignment:** Planning Division/PG&E; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: On-going; Projected Units: N/A.

- 43 Develop informational materials for dissemination to developers and project designers during development review. These materials shall include, but not be limited to, passive solar planning through subdivision, lot and structure orientation; protecting solar access and application of passive and active energy saving features. The City shall also review its land use regulations and subdivision ordinance and where appropriate add provisions which promote and/or require energy conservation planning as a factor of project approval.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1993; Projected Units: N/A.

**GOAL # 8**

To ensure the highest possible quality of life for every resident through balancing and blending the need for shelter with sensitivity and respect for Chico's unique natural setting.

**Objectives: Quality of Life**

- (r) Encourage residential development which provides quality housing and incorporates good design principles.
- (s) Promote new and in-fill housing projects which meet specific housing needs and are design responsive to the site and surrounding built and natural environment.

**Policies: Quality of Life**

- 8.1 Use the City's architectural review process to ensure that medium and high-density in-fill projects are sensitive to the character and appearance of their surroundings.
- 8.2 Use the Planned Development regulations to refine land use policies and promote design flexibility for residential developments, particularly for those located in unique settings.

**Programs: Quality of Life**

- 44 Amend the City's Design review Manual to reflect changes to the land use regulations due to the General Plan Update and the adoption of a Community Design Element.

**Assignment:** Planning Division; Funding: City Funded Staff;  
Time: 1994-1995; Projected Units: N/A.

# GLOSSARY





## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Acoustical Engineer.** An engineer specializing in the measurement and physical properties of sound. In environmental review, the acoustical engineer measures noise impacts of proposed projects and designs measures to reduce those impacts.

**Acoustics.** The physical qualities of a room or other enclosure (such as size, shape, amount of noise) that determine the audibility and perception of speech and music.

**Acre, Gross.** Area of a site calculated to the centerline of bounding streets and other public rights-of-way.

**Acre, Net.** The portion of a site that can actually be built upon. Not included in the net acreage of a site are public or private road rights-of-way, public open space, and flood ways.

**Ambient Conditions.** Initial background concentration sensed/measured at a monitoring/sampling site, as in air quality or noise.

**Aquifer.** A natural underground formation that is saturated with water, and from which water can be withdrawn.

**Areas of Special Biological Importance (ASBI), as defined by Butte County.** ASBI provide a critical link for certain wildlife populations, contain ecological communities that offer outstanding examples of natural systems, are limited in extent either naturally or as a result of human-caused impacts, or provide habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species.

**Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE).** A federal agency responsible for the design and implementation of publicly-supported engineering projects. Any construction activity that involves filling a watercourse, pond, lake (natural or man-made), or wetlands (including seasonal wetlands and vernal pools), may require an ACOE permit.

**Arterials.** A vehicular right-of-way whose primary function is to carry through traffic in a continuous route across an urban area while also providing some access to abutting land.

**ADT.** Average daily traffic.

**Attainment Area.** An area considered to have air quality as good as or better than federal or State air quality standards as defined in the federal Clean Air Act or the California Clean Air Act. An area may be an attainment area for one pollutant and a non-attainment area for others.

**Auto-oriented Uses.** Land uses designed to accommodate customers who use autos to travel to the site, including automobile sales and service, building supplies and materials and drive-up or drive-through uses.

**Average Daily Traffic (ADT).** The number of vehicles passing a given point on a road going in a direction during a 24-hour period.

**Bike Lane.** A corridor expressly reserved by markings for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles.

**Bike Path.** A paved route not on a street or roadway, expressly reserved for bicycles. Bike paths may parallel roads but typically are separated from them by landscaping.

**Biotic Diversity.** Species diversity - i.e., number of different species occurring in a location or under some condition.

**Buildout.** That level of urban development characterized by full occupancy of all developable sites in accordance with the General Plan; the maximum probable level of development envisioned by the General Plan under specified assumptions about densities and intensities. Buildout does not assume that each parcel is developed to include all floor area or housing units possible under zoning regulations.

**CAI.** California Archaeological Inventory.

**Caltrans.** California Department of Transportation.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP).** The multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements based on studies of fiscal resources available and the choice of specific improvements to be constructed.

**Carbon Monoxide (CO).** A colorless, odorless gas, formed by the incomplete combustion of fuels, which is toxic because of its tendency to reduce the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood.

**CARD.** Chico Area Recreation and Park District.

**CMP.** Congestion Management Program, Butte County

**Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL).** A 24-hour energy equivalent level derived from a variety of single-noise events, with weighting factors of 5 and 10 dB applied to the evening (7:00 to 10:00 p.m.) and nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) periods, respectively, to allow for the greater sensitivity to noise during those hours. An alternative measure is day-night average sound level ( $L_{dn}$ ), the A-weighted average sound level for a given area (measured in decibels) during a 24-hour period with a 10 dB weighting applied to nighttime sound levels. The  $L_{dn}$  is approximately numerically equal to the CNEL for most environmental settings.

**Community-sized Shopping Centers.** A shopping center on a 20- to 40-acre site, with 200,000 to 400,000 square feet of space serving a trade area population of 40,000 to 150,000. Tenants typically include a junior department store and large variety or chain drug store.

**Conservation.** The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect.

**Critical Facility.** Facilities having a vital role in a potential emergency, the failure of which might prove catastrophic.

**CSA.** County Service Area

**CSUC.** California State University, Chico

**Culvert.** A drain, ditch or conduit not incorporated in a closed system that carries drainage water under a driveway, roadway, railroad, pedestrian walk or public way. Culverts are often built to channelize streams and as part of flood control systems.

**Curb Cut.** The opening along the curb line at which point vehicles or other wheeled forms of transportation may enter or leave the roadway. Curb cuts are essential at street corners for wheelchair users.

**CUSD.** Chico Unified School District

**Day-Night Average Sound Level (Ldn).** The A-weighted average sound level in decibels during a 24-hour period with a 10 dB weighing applied to nighttime sound levels (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.). This exposure method is similar to the CNEL, but deletes the evening time period (7 p.m. to 10 p.m.) as a separate factor.

**Decibel "A-Weighted" (dBA).** The scale for measuring sound in decibels that weights or reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing. See also Decibel.

**Decibel (dB).** A unit used to express the relative intensity of a sound as it is heard by the human ear. The decibel measuring scale is logarithmic. Zero (0 dB) on the scale is the lowest sound level that a normal ear can detect under very quiet ("laboratory") conditions and is referred to as the "threshold" of human hearing. On the logarithmic scale, 10 decibels are 10 times more intense, 20 decibels are 100 times more intense, and 30 decibels are 1,000 times more intense than 1 decibel. See also Decibel "A-Weighted."

**Density, Gross.** The number of dwelling units per gross acre of developable residential land designated on the General Plan Diagram.

**Design Capacity.** The capacity at which a street, water distribution pipe, pump or reservoir, or a wastewater pipe or treatment plant is intended to operate.

**Development Fees.** Direct charges or dedications collected on a one-time basis for a service provided or as a condition of approval being granted by the local government.

**Easement.** A right given by the owner of land to another party for specific limited use of that land. An easement may be acquired by a government through dedication when the purchase of an entire interest in the property may be too expensive or unnecessary.

**EMF.** Electric and magnetic field.

**Emission Factor.** The rate at which pollutants are emitted into the atmosphere by one source or a combination of sources.

**Endangered Species, California.** A native species or sub-species of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant, which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all or a significant portion of its range, due to one or more factors, including loss in habitat, change in habitat, over-exploitation, predation, competition, or disease. The status is determined by the State Department of Fish and Game together with the State Fish and Game Commission.

**Endangered Species, Federal.** A species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range, other than the species of the Class Insecta determined to constitute a pest whose protection under the provisions of the 1973 Endangered Species Act, as amended, would present an overwhelming and overriding risk to humans. The status is determined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of the Interior.



**Environment.** The physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historical or aesthetic significance. The area involved shall be the area in which significant effects would occur either directly or indirectly as a result of the project. The "environment" includes both natural and man-made conditions.

**EPA.** Environmental Protection Agency.

**Equivalent Noise Level (Leq).** A single-number representation of the fluctuating sound level in decibels over a specified period of time. It is a sound-energy average of the fluctuating level.

**Erosion.** The process by which material is removed from the earth's surface (including weathering, dissolution, abrasion, and transportation), most commonly by wind or water.

**Fault.** A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted. An active fault is a fault that has moved recently and which is likely to again. An inactive fault is a fault which shows no evidence of movement in recent geologic time and no potential for movement in the relatively near future.

**Federal Candidate Species, Category 1 (Candidate 1).** Species for which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has sufficient biological information to support a proposal to list as Endangered or Threatened.

**Federal Candidate Species, Category 2 (Candidate 2).** Species for which existing information indicates that these species may warrant listing, but for which substantial biological information to support a proposed rule is lacking.

**Federal Flood Insurance.** Affordable flood insurance offered by the federal government to property owners whose communities participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

**FEMA.** Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Floor Area, Gross.** The total horizontal area in square feet of all floors within the exterior walls of a building, but not including the area of unroofed inner courts or shaft enclosures.

**FIRM.** Flood Insurance Rate Map.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR).** The ratio between gross floor area of structures on a site and gross site area. Thus, a two-story building covering 50 percent of its site would have a FAR of 1.0.

**Foothills.** The eastern hillside portion of the Planning Area, generally characterized by oak woodland habitat above the 200-foot elevation.

**Foothill Park.** A specific development project in the Northeast Quadrant, north of Eaton Road and east of Cohasset Road.

**Groundwater.** Water under the earth's surface, often confined to aquifers capable of supplying wells and springs.

**Groundwater Recharge.** The natural process of infiltration and percolation of rainwater from land areas or streams through permeable soils into water-holding rocks that provide underground storage ("i.e. aquifers").

**Habitat.** The natural environment of a plant or animal.

**Hazardous Material.** A material or form of energy that could cause injury or illness to persons, livestock, or the natural environment.

**Hazardous Waste.** Waste which requires special handling to avoid illness or injury to persons or damage to property. Includes, but is not limited to, inorganic mineral acids of sulfur, fluorine, chlorine, nitrogen, chromium, phosphorous, selenium and arsenic and their common salts; lead, nickel, and mercury and their inorganic salts or metallo-organic derivatives; coal, tar acids such as phenol and cresols and their salts; and all radioactive materials.

**Household.** Person or persons living in one dwelling unit.

**Housing Unit, Multi-family.** Units with two or more housing units in one structure.

**Housing Unit, Single-Family Attached.** Single family units that are attached to other units with adjoining walls extending from ground to roof that separate it from other adjoining structures and form a property line. Each unit has its own heating system.

**Housing Unit, Single-Family Detached.** Single family units that are detached from any other house with open space on all four sides.

**Hydrocarbons (HC).** These gases represent unburned and wasted fuel. They come from incomplete combustion of gasoline and from evaporation of petroleum fuels.

**Impervious Surface.** Any material which reduces or prevents absorption of water into land.

**Indirect Source.** Any structure or installation which attracts an activity which creates emissions of pollutants. For example, a major employment center, a shopping center, an airport, or a stadium can all be considered to be indirect sources.

**Infill.** The development of new housing or other buildings on scattered vacant lots in a built-up area or on new building parcels created by permitted lot splits.

**Infiltration.** The introduction of underground water, such as groundwater, into wastewater collection systems. Infiltration results in increased wastewater flow levels.

**Infrastructure.** Permanent utility installations, including roads, water supply lines, sewage collection pipes, and power and communications lines.

**Intersection Capacity.** The maximum number of vehicles that has a reasonable expectation of passing through an intersection in one direction during a given time period under prevailing roadway and traffic conditions.

**Inversion.** Temperature inversions limit the amount of vertical mixing of air and thus trap pollutants in the lower atmosphere where people breathe. Inversions are characterized by a layer of warmer air above a layer of cooler air, a reversal of the normal decline in temperature with increasing altitude.

**Jobs-Housing Balance.** The jobs/housing ratio divides the number of jobs in an area by the number of employed residents. A ratio of 1.0 typically indicates a balance. A ratio greater than 1.0 indicates a net in-commute; less than 1.0 indicates a net out-commute.

**LAFCO.** Local Agency Formation Commission of Butte County.

**Landslide.** The downslope movement of soil and rock.

**Land Use.** The purpose or activity for which a piece of land or its buildings is designed, arranged, or intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained.

**Level of Service (LOS).** The different operating conditions which occur in a lane or roadway when accommodating various traffic volumes. A qualitative measure of the effect of traffic flow factors such as special travel time, interruptions, freedom to maneuver, driver comfort, and convenience, and indirectly, safety and operating cost. Levels of service are usually described by a letter rating system of A through F, with LOS A indicating stable traffic flow with little or no delays and LOS F indicating excessive delays and jammed traffic conditions.

**Liquefaction.** A sudden large decrease in the shearing resistance of a cohesionless soil, caused by a collapse of the structure by shock or strain, and associated with a sudden but temporary increase of the pore fluid pressure.

**Materials Recovery Facility (MRF).** A permitted solid waste facility which sorts or separates, by hand or by use of machinery, solid wastes or materials for the purposes of recycling, composting or transformation.

**Maximum Credible Earthquake.** The largest Richter magnitude (M) seismic event that appears to be reasonably capable of occurring under the conditions of the presently known geological framework.

**Mitigation.** A specific action taken to reduce environmental impacts. Mitigation measures are required as a component of an environmental impact report (EIR) if significant impacts are identified.

**Mitigation Measure.** Action taken to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. Mitigation includes: avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance during the life of the action; and compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

**Mobile Home.** A structure, transportable in one or more sections which is built on a permanent chassis and designed to be used as a dwelling unit, with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities.

**Mobile Sources.** A source of air pollution that is related to transportation vehicles, such as automobiles or buses.

**Neighborhood Shopping Centers.** A small retail center with up to 120,000 square feet of space on an 8-12 acre site serving a trading area population of 5,000 to 15,000. The principal tenant typically is a supermarket.

**Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).** A reddish brown gas that is a byproduct of the combustion process and is a key to the ozone production process.

**Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>).** Chemical compounds containing nitrogen and oxygen; reacts with volatile organic compounds, in the presence of heat and sunlight to form ozone. It is also a major precursor to acid rain.



**Noise Contour(s).** Isolines (a line on a map or chart along which there is a constant value) representing noise, measured in decibels. See also Community Noise Equivalent Level.

**Non-point Source.** A pollutant source introduced from dispersed points and lacking a single, identifiable origin. Examples include automobile emissions or urban run-off.

**NPDES.** National Pollution Discharge Elimination System.

**100-Year Flood.** That flood event which has a one percent chance of occurrence in any one year.

**Open Space.** Any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use as defined in the General Plan or designated on a local, regional, or state open-space plan as one of the four types of open space defined by state planning law.

**Oxidant.** The production of photochemical reactions in the atmosphere between reactive organic gases and oxides of nitrogen.

**Ozone.** A compound consisting of three oxygen atoms, that is the primary constituent of smog. It is formed through chemical reactions in the atmosphere involving volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, and sunlight. Ozone can initiate damage to the lungs as well as damage to trees, crops, and materials. There is a natural layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere which shields the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation.

**PM-10.** The current standard for measuring the amount of solid or liquid matter suspended in the atmosphere ("particulate matter including dust"). Refers to the amount of particulate matter over 10 micrometers in diameter. The smaller PM-10 particles penetrate to the deeper portions of the lung, affecting sensitive population groups such as children and people with respiratory diseases.

**Peak Hour Traffic.** The number of vehicles passing over a designated section of a street during the busiest one-hour period during a 24-hour period.

**Pedestrian-oriented Development.** Development designed with an emphasis on the street sidewalk and on pedestrian access to the building, rather than an auto access and parking areas.

**Percent Slope.** A common way of expressing the steepness of the slope of terrain, which is derived by dividing the change in elevation by the horizontal distance traversed. An increase of 20 feet elevation over a 100 foot distance is a 20 percent slope.

**Planning Area.** The City and the land outside its boundaries that bear relation to its planning.

**Plume.** The volume of air, surface water, or groundwater space containing any of the substance emitted from a point source.

**Point Source.** A source of pollutants which may be traced to a discrete point of emission.

**Precursor.** A chemical compound that leads to the formation of a pollutant. Reactive organic gases and nitrogen oxides are precursors of photochemical oxidants.

**Rare Species.** A condition in which a species or subspecies, although not currently threatened with extinction, exists in such small numbers throughout its range that it may be endangered if the quality of its environment worsens.

**Reactive Organic Gases (ROG).** Classes of hydrocarbons (olefins, substituted aromatics, and aldehydes) that are likely to react with ozone and nitrogen dioxide in the atmosphere to form photochemical smog.

**Reclaimed Wastewater.** Treated sewage or excess irrigation water with chlorine or other chemical disinfectants added.

**Recycling.** Any of a variety of processes whereby waste is separated for reuse or reprocessing into a useful form.

**Response Time.** The amount of time for an emergency services response, measured from the time of the distress call until arrival on the scene.

**Retention Area.** A pond, pool, lagoon, or basin used for the storage of water runoff.

**Richter Scale.** A logarithmic scale developed in 1935/36 by Dr. Charles F. Richter and Dr. Beno Gutenberg to measure earthquake magnitude by the amount of energy released, as opposed to earthquake intensity as determined by local effects on people, structures, and earth materials.

**Right-of-Way.** A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, forced dedication, prescription or condemnation, and intended to be occupied or actually occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary storm sewer or other similar use.

**Riparian.** Pertaining to the bank of a natural course of water, whether seasonal or annual. Riparian habitat is defined by the surrounding vegetation or presence of known wildlife movement pathways; it borders or surrounds a waterway.

**Sedimentation.** Process by which material suspended in water is deposited in a body of water.

**Sensitive Receptors.** Members of the population who are most sensitive to air quality include children, the elderly, the acutely ill, and the chronically ill. The term "sensitive receptors" can also refer to the land use categories where these people live or spend a significant amount of time. Such areas include residences, schools, playgrounds, child care centers, hospitals, retirement homes, and convalescent homes.

**Siltation.** The process of silt deposition. Silt is a loose sedimentary material composed of finely divided particles of soil or rock, often carried in cloudy suspension in water.

**SMARA.** California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975.

**Solid Waste.** Unwanted or discarded material, including garbage, with insufficient liquid content to be free flowing.

**Source Separation.** A process in which solid waste materials are produced as an autonomous waste product which are stored separately at the site of generation, or are physically separated from all other solid wastes into recyclable, compostable, or other fractions at the site of generation.

**Sphere of Influence (SOI).** The ultimate service area of the City of Chico as established by Butte County LAFCO.

**Stationary Source.** A source of air pollution that is not mobile, such as a heating plant or an exhaust stack from a laboratory.

**Subdivision.** The division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land for sale, development, or lease.

**Subsidence.** The gradual sinking of land as a result of natural or man-made causes.

**Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>).** A heavy, pungent, colorless air pollutant formed primarily by the combustion of fossil fuels. It is a respiratory irritant, especially for asthmatics and is the major precursor to the formation of acid rain.

**Threatened Species, California.** A species of animal or plant is endangered when its survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, over-exploitation, predation, competition, disease, or other factors; or when although not presently threatened with extinction, the species is existing in such small numbers that it may become endangered if its environment worsens. A species of animal or plant shall be presumed to be rare or endangered as it is listed in: Sections 670.2 or 670.5, Title 14, California Code of Regulations; or Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations Sections 17.11 or 17.12 pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act as rare, threatened, or endangered.

**Threatened Species, Federal.** A species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

**Trip Generation.** The number of vehicle trip ends associated with (i.e., produced by) a particular land use or traffic study site. A trip end is defined as a single vehicle movement. Roundtrips consist of two trip ends.

**Transportation Systems Management (TSM).** Measures designed to reduce peak-period auto traffic by making a more efficient use of existing resources, and emphasizing transit, ridesharing, and non-automobile alternatives.

**Unique Natural Area.** As defined by Butte County, Unique Natural Areas are remarkable because of their limited nature or the unusual conditions required for their existence, because they are outstanding examples of natural systems, or because they are especially aesthetic.

**URM.** Unreinforced masonry buildings or structures.

**Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).** A measure of both the volume and extent of motor vehicle operation; the total number of vehicle miles travelled within a specified geographical area (whether the entire country or a smaller area) over a given period of time.

**Viewshed.** The geographic area from which a site is visible, a collection of viewpoints.

**Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs).** A group of chemicals that react in the atmosphere with nitrogen oxides in the presence of heat and sunlight to form ozone: does not include methane and other compounds determined by EPA to have negligible photochemical reactivity. Examples of VOCs include gasoline fumes and oil-based paints.

**Volume-to-Capacity Ratio (V/C).** In reference to public services or transportation, ratio of peak hour use to capacity.



**Waste Stream.** All solid, semi-solid and liquid wastes including garbage, refuse, paper, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles and parts thereof, discarded home and industrial appliances, manure, vegetable or animal solid and semisolid wastes, and other paper, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles and parts thereof, discarded home and industrial appliances, manure, vegetable or animal solid and semisolid wastes, and other discarded solid and semisolid wastes.

**Wetlands.** An area at least periodically wet or flooded; where the water table stands at or above the land surface (bogs and marshes). Also those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

**Wildlife Corridors.** A natural corridor, such as an undeveloped ravine, that is frequently used by wildlife to travel from one area to another.

**Williamson Act.** Known formally as the *California Land Conservation Act of 1965*, it was designed as an incentive to retain prime agricultural land and open space in agricultural use, thereby slowing its conversion to urban and suburban development. The program entails a ten-year contract between the City or County and an owner of land, whereby the land is taxed on the basis of its agricultural use rather than its market value. The land becomes subject to certain enforceable restrictions, and certain conditions need to be met prior to approval of an agreement.

**Xeric.** Vegetation requiring only a small amount of moisture.

**Zoning District.** A specifically delineated area on a zoning map within which regulations and requirements uniformly govern the use, placement, spacing, and size of buildings, open spaces, and other facilities.

**Zoning Ordinance.** The City ordinance which divides Chico into districts and establishes regulations governing the use, placement, spacing, and size of buildings, open spaces, and other facilities.



# APPENDIX







## **APPENDIX A**

### **ADOPTING RESOLUTION**



RESOLUTION NO. 82 94-95

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICO  
ADOPTING THE COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE OF THE GENERAL PLAN OF  
NOVEMBER 16, 1994 AND REPEALING THE EXISTING CITY OF CHICO PLAN  
ADOPTED ON JULY 6, 1976

WHEREAS, pursuant to state statutes, the Chico City Council adopted a General Plan for the City of Chico on July 6, 1976, and has from time to time amended said plan; and

WHEREAS, due to the passage of time, continuing increases in population and related development, other changing conditions in the Chico Urban Area, and adoption of new federal and state legislation affecting local land use and growth, the City Council determined to initiate a comprehensive update to the General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, pursuant to Government Code Section 65300, considered and established a Planning Area for said update which encompasses an approximate 155-square-mile territory located in western Butte County, approximately 100 miles north of the City of Sacramento, and 180 miles south of the northern California border. The Planning Area is further defined as being bound on the north by Rock Creek and generally on the south by the Sacramento River, Fell Road and a boundary line that extends eastward to the intersection of Neal Road and State Route (SR) 99, and follows Neal Road to a point approximately 3 miles southwest of the Town of Paradise. The eastern border is formed by the existing 500 kV Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) power line, the northernmost Bidwell Park boundary, and an average 1,400-foot elevation line in the foothills. The western border is the Sacramento River; and

WHEREAS, after establishing said Planning Area, the City Council initiated the General Plan update process in late 1991 with

1 the appointment by the City Council of a 41-member Task Force. The  
2 members of the Task Force resided within the Planning Area, both  
3 within and outside of the incorporated boundaries of the City of  
4 Chico. The Comprehensive Update of the General Plan began with the  
5 identification of issues relevant to the update process, an  
6 assessment of the positive characteristics of the Chico Urban Area's  
7 built and natural environment and preparation of a Master  
8 Environmental Assessment (MEA) for the Planning Area; and

9 WHEREAS, the City Council, Planning Commission and Task Force  
10 evaluated said background information and considered opportunities  
11 and constraints presented by this data and various planning and land  
12 use options for the Planning Area; and

13 WHEREAS, based on the above background information, the City  
14 Council, Planning Commission and Task Force further conducted an  
15 extensive evaluation of various potential growth areas adjoining the  
16 Chico Urban Area and within the Planning Area; and

17 WHEREAS, the results of such analysis were used by the Council,  
18 Commission and Task Force to direct preparation of a Discussion  
19 Draft General Plan which contained all seven required general plan  
20 elements: the Land Use Element, Transportation Element, Parks,  
21 Public Facilities and Services Element, Open Space and Environmental  
22 Conservation Element, Safety and Safety Services Element, Noise  
23 Element, and the Housing Element. The Housing Element was  
24 incorporated by reference because it was recently updated by the  
25 City. Two optional elements, the Economic Development Element and  
26 the Community Design Element, were also included in the  
27 Comprehensive update of the City's General Plan; and

28 WHEREAS, the Discussion Draft General Plan was widely



1 distributed and several public work sessions were conducted with the  
2 City Council, Planning Commission and Task Force to review the plan  
3 and receive public testimony; and

4 WHEREAS, a Draft General Plan was prepared to reflect City  
5 Council direction emanating from said work sessions; and

6 WHEREAS, a Draft Environmental Impact Report was also prepared  
7 and publicly noticed pursuant to the California Environmental  
8 Quality Act; and

9 WHEREAS, public comments on the draft Environmental Impact  
10 Report were received and Responses were prepared and distributed in  
11 the form of a Final EIR in accordance with CEQA; and

12 WHEREAS, this Council, having considered the Final  
13 Environmental Impact Report for the Comprehensive Update of the  
14 General Plan and having certified said Final Environmental Impact  
15 Report making the required findings and adopting a statement of  
16 overriding consideration pursuant to the California Environmental  
17 Quality Act; and

18 WHEREAS, the State planning and zoning laws require that the  
19 Planning Commission make a written recommendation on the adoption  
20 or amendment of a General Plan; and

21 WHEREAS, the Planning Commission adopted a Resolution  
22 recommending City Council adoption of the Comprehensive Update to  
23 the General Plan by not less than a majority of the total  
24 membership; and

25 WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Chico has held a  
26 noticed public hearing and has deemed the proposed Comprehensive  
27 Update to the General Plan to be in the public interest.

28 //

1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City  
2 of Chico as follows:

- 3 1. That the Comprehensive Update of the General Plan dated  
4 November 1994, including that certain text set forth in  
5 said Plan and the Land Use Diagram which designates  
6 residential, commercial, industrial, public and open  
7 space land use within the Chico Urban Area and Planning  
8 Area, and any additional amendments deemed appropriate by  
9 the City Council at the November 16, 1994 public hearing,  
10 is hereby adopted, effective immediately, as the General  
11 Plan for the City of Chico.
- 12 2. That all mitigation measures set forth in the Final  
13 Environmental Impact Report for the Comprehensive Update  
14 of the General Plan are hereby incorporated by reference  
15 as if set forth herein in full.
- 16 3. That the mitigation monitoring program contained in the  
17 Final Environmental Impact Report is hereby adopted by  
18 reference and incorporated herein.
- 19 4. That, the City Council has further acted, by a two-thirds  
20 vote, to override the Airport Land Use Commission's  
21 finding that the Comprehensive Update of the General Plan  
22 is inconsistent with the 1978 Chico Municipal Airport  
23 Environs Land Use Plan, finding:
  - 24 a. That the Comprehensive Update of the General Plan is  
25 consistent with the updated 1994 Chico Municipal  
26 Airport Noise Compatibility Plan.
  - 27 b. That the Comprehensive Update of the General Plan  
28 pertaining to the CMA Environs area shall be

1 consistent with the update of the Chico Municipal  
2 Airport Environs Plan.

3 c. That in making those findings noted in (a) and (b)  
4 above, the Council also finds that the Comprehensive  
5 Update of the General Plan is consistent with the  
6 findings contained in Article 3.5, Chapter 4, Part  
7 1, Division 9, Section 21670 of the Public Utilities  
8 Code.

9 5. That the General Plan be dedicated to the memory of Anne  
10 Dorr Longazo (1920-1993) whose service to the community,  
11 including serving as a Councilmember and Planning  
12 Commissioner, spanned three decades.

13 6. That the Council hereby expresses its appreciation to the  
14 General Plan Task Force, Planning Commission, and to  
15 other members of the public who have participated in and  
16 contributed to the preparation and adoption of the new  
17 General Plan.

18 7. That the General Plan for the City of Chico, which was  
19 adopted by Resolution No. 4 76-77 on July 6, 1976, is  
20 hereby rescinded, repealed and superseded.

21 8. That the Planning Director is hereby directed to prepare  
22 a final General Plan and Land Use Diagram and to  
23 incorporate any amendments approved by the City Council  
24 at the public hearing of November 16, 1994.

25 9. That copies of the General Plan, including the Land Use  
26 Diagram, be kept on file in the offices of the City Clerk  
27 and the Planning Division, and that copies be made  
28 available to local libraries.

1 THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was adopted at a regular meeting of  
2 the City Council of the City of Chico held on the 16th day  
3 of November , 1994 by the following vote:

4 AYES: Councilmembers Andrews, Fletcher, Francis, Guzzetti, Hubert,  
McGinnis and Owens.

5 NOES: None.

6 ABSTAIN: None.

7 ABSENT: None.

8 //

9 ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

10 

11 Barbara Evans  
12 City Clerk



Robert G. Boehm  
City Attorney



## **APPENDIX B**

### **State Route Traffic Analysis Report**

**PREPARED BY**

**Korve Engineering, Inc.**



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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

This report provides additional traffic analysis to support the General Plan Circulation Element and address the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 3's concerns about local circulation in relation to the state highway system. This analysis focuses on the operation of ramp terminal and adjacent intersections along State Route 32 and 99 through the City of Chico. Additional analyses and recommendations for other areas of the City will be completed during the environmental review of the Draft General Plan. Also contained in this appendix are improvement lists proposed for the circulation system, including priority bikeway projects, and a discussion of effects of the implementation of a more focussed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program.

## **1.1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to analyze existing and future traffic conditions along state highways at the intersections identified in Table B-1. For selected locations a detailed capacity analysis is conducted to identify deficient intersections. For these locations, the analysis also includes an assessment of potential improvements designed to accommodate future travel demand at acceptable operating levels. Additional interchange and roadway locations are analyzed qualitatively by identifying existing and future problems and planned improvements. The information is based on conversations with the City of Chico, Caltrans - District 3, and a number of existing reports.

The appendix also presents the Major Roadway Projects and Priority Bikeway Improvements lists and responds to specific impacts on the State Highway system. These lists of improvements are consistent with Section 3 Circulation Element and the General Plan diagram. The discussion of TDM program recommends, in addition to the existing City of Chico ordinance, that a goal of 60 percent single occupancy vehicles be achieved in traffic zones with employment of 1,000 or more.

**TABLE B-1**  
**LIST OF STUDY LOCATIONS**

Intersection/Interchange	
<b>SR 99/East Avenue Interchange</b>	<b>Other Interchanges</b>
Tom Polk Avenue/East Avenue	Eaton Road Interchange
SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue*	SR 32 Interchange
SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue*	20th Street Interchange
Connors Court/East Avenue	Skyway Interchange
<b>SR 99/Cohasset Road Interchange</b>	<b>SR 32</b>
Mangrove Avenue/Cohasset Road	Walnut Street/West 9th Street
SR 99 Southbound Off Ramp/Cohasset Road	Walnut Street/West 8th Street
SR 99 Southbound Loop On Ramp/Cohasset Road	Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue North*
SR 99 Northbound Loop On Ramp/Cohasset Road	Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue South*
SR 99 Northbound Off Ramp/Cohasset Road	Nord Avenue/West 8th Avenue
Heritage Lane/Cohasset Road	Nord Avenue/Oak Way
<b>SR 99/First Avenue Interchange</b>	Nord Avenue/East Avenue
Sheridan Avenue/First Avenue	Nord Avenue/Kennedy Avenue
SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/First Avenue*	Nord Avenue/Muir Avenue/Eaton Road Extension
SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/First Avenue*	
Sarah Avenue/First Avenue	

Source: Kolve Engineering, Inc., City of Chico, 1993.

## 1.2 ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Preparation of the existing and future traffic analyses followed the techniques and procedures of the Circular 212 Planning Method described in the *Transportation Research Circular, Interim Materials on Highway Capacity, Number 212* (Transportation Research Board, January, 1980). Circular 212 analysis techniques generate levels of service (LOS) to describe traffic flow conditions. Table B-2 on the following page describes the levels of service, which vary qualitatively from LOS A (the best) to LOS F (the worst).



**TABLE B-2**  
**LEVEL OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION**

LOS	Description
A	Represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream.
B	Stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable.
C	Stable flow, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream.
D	Represents high density, but stable flow.
E	Represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level.
F	Represents forced or breakdown flow.

Source: *Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209*, Transportation Research Board. 1985.

### 1.3 ANALYSIS EVALUATION CRITERIA

The City of Chico has set a LOS standard of "D" for intersection operations at interchanges. Caltrans District 3 has adopted LOS "D" as the route concept standard for State Routes 32 and 99. For the purposes of this study, an intersection that operates worse than LOS "D" will indicate a deficiency. Lane utilization was based on actual field data for left, through, and right turns by approach and standard assumptions in Circular 212 for more than one through lane in one direction. The through lane assumptions assume a 52.5 percent and 47.5 percent lane utilization in the more heavily used lane.

### 1.4 REPORT ORGANIZATION

This report contains four sections, including:

- 1 - Introduction;
- 2 - Existing Traffic Conditions;
- 3 - Future Traffic Conditions; and
- 4 - Analysis Results.

The introduction defines the purpose of this analysis while also identifying the analysis methodology and the analysis evaluation criteria. Sections 2.0 and 3.0 describe

existing and future conditions, respectively. And, section 4.0 summarizes the analysis results, presents the circulation improvement lists for roadways and bikeways, and discusses the effects of a more focussed Transportation Demand Management program.

## **2 EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

This section describes existing traffic conditions for interchanges and intersections on State Highways through the City of Chico.

### **2.1 STUDY INTERSECTIONS**

Data was collected at 14 critical ramp intersections and adjacent local intersections along SR 32 and SR 99 in the City of Chico. AM and PM peak hour turning movement data was collected on a typical weekday during the week of November 15, 1993 between the hours of 7:00 and 9:00 AM and 4:00 and 6:00 PM. Additional AM and PM peak hour data for 10 intersections on SR 32 was provided by Caltrans District 3. The intersections/interchanges are listed in Table B-1. Intersections were selected in conjunction with Caltrans and City of Chico staff.

Detailed turning movement data was collected for the following interchanges with SR 99: East Avenue, Cohasset Road, and 1st Avenue. Identified deficiencies for the remaining interchanges at Eaton Road, SR 32, 20th Street, and Skyway are based on conversations with Caltrans District 3 and City of Chico staff and the following documents and studies:

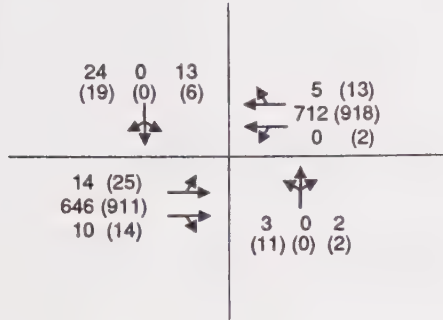
- Route Concept Report for SR 32
- Highway 32/Eaton Road Alignment Study
- Southwest Chico Circulation Study (on-going)
- Skyway Interchange PSR (on-going)
- SR 32 Project Study Report (on-going)
- North Chico Specific Plan

### **2.2 EXISTING TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

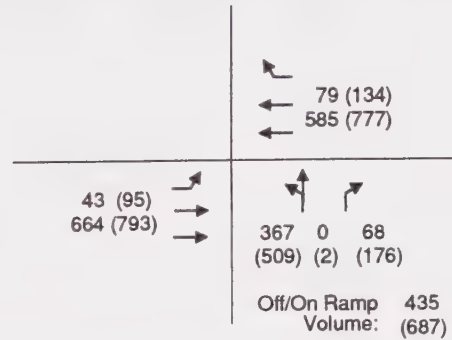
Existing lane configurations and AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes are shown in Figure B-1 for the locations selected for detailed analyses.

**Tom Polk Avenue and East Avenue**

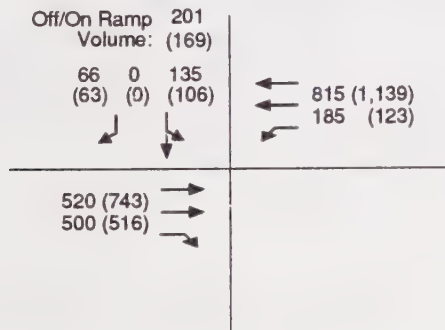
Intersection Control: 2-way stop  
AM (PM)

**SR 99 (NB) On/Off Ramps and East Avenue**

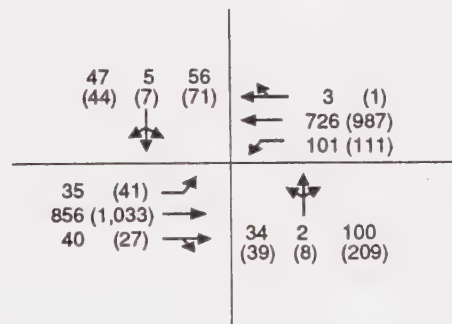
Intersection Control: Signalized

**SR 99 (SB) On/Off Ramps and East Avenue**

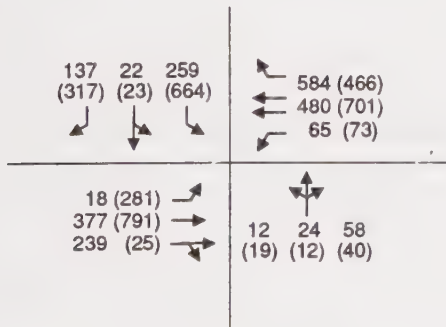
Intersection Control: Signalized

**Connors Court and East Avenue**

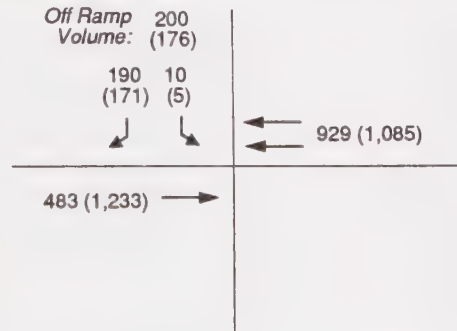
Intersection Control: Signalized

**Mangrove Avenue and Cohasset Road**

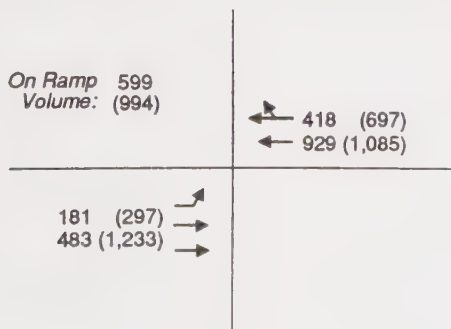
Intersection Control: Signalized  
AM (PM)

**SR 99 (SB) Off Ramp and Cohasset Road**

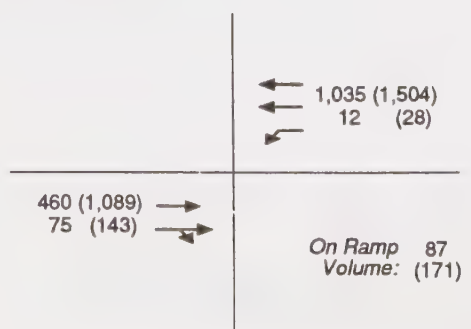
Intersection Control: Stop

**SR 99 (SB) Loop On Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop

**SR 99 (NB) Loop On Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop

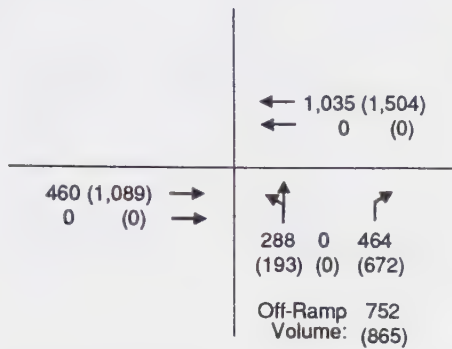




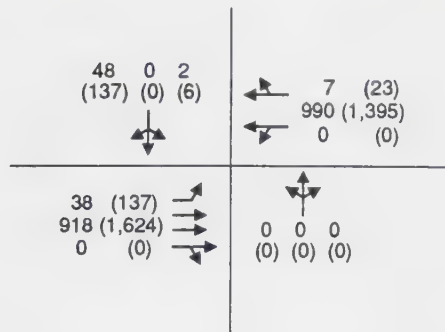
**SR 99 (NB) Off Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop

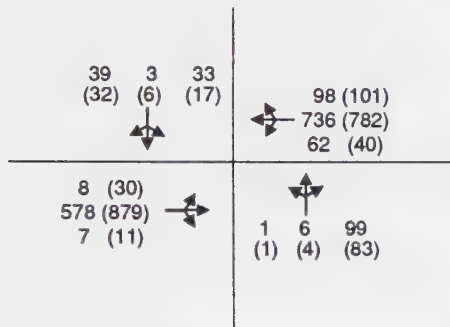
AM/(PM)

**Cohasset Road and Heritage Lane**

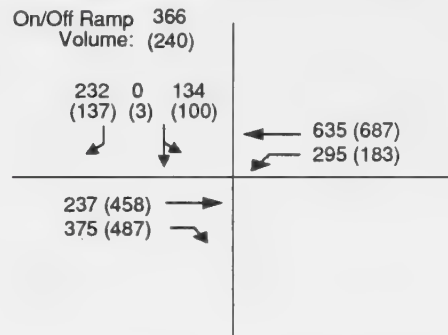
Intersection Control: 2-way stop

**Sheridan Avenue and East First Avenue**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop

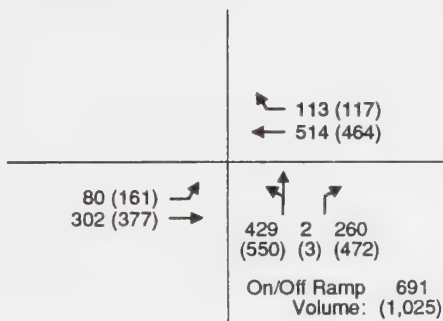
**SR 99 (SB) On/Off Ramps and 1st Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized

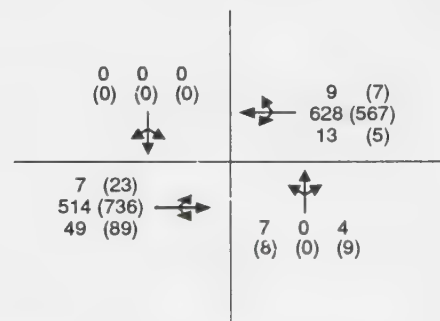
**SR 99 (NB) On/Off Ramps and First Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized

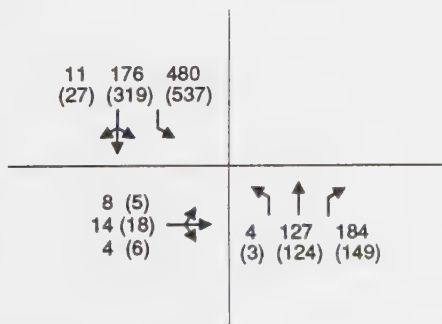
AM/(PM)

**Sarah Avenue and First Avenue**

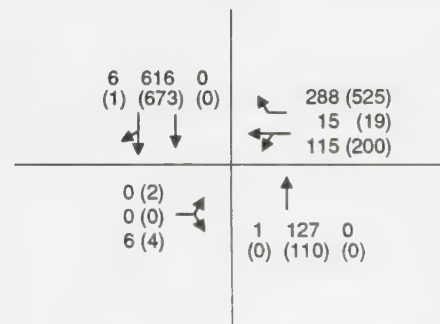
Intersection Control: 1-way stop

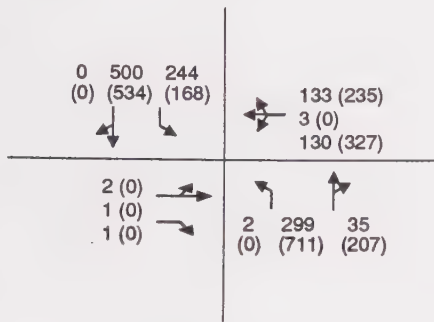
**Walnut Street and Ninth Street**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop

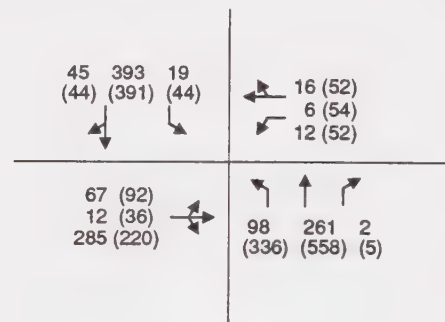
**Walnut Street and 8th Street**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop

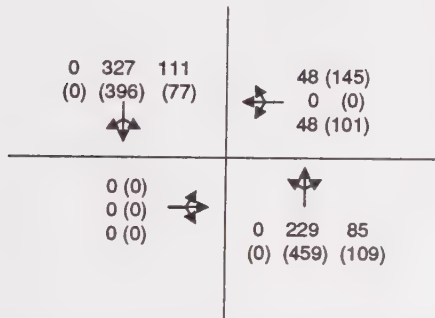


**Nord Avenue and West Sacramento Avenue (N)**Intersection Control: Signalized  
AM/(PM)**Nord Avenue and West Sacramento Avenue (S)**

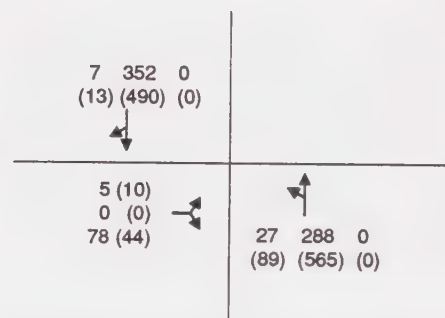
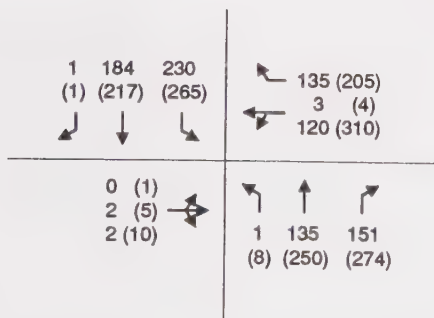
Intersection Control: Signalized

**Nord Avenue and West Eighth Avenue**

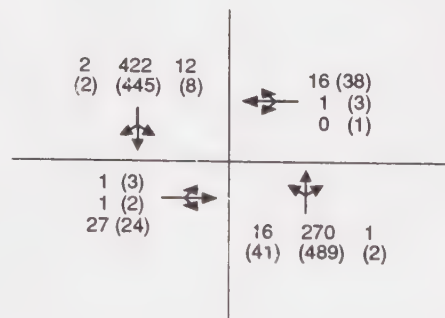
Intersection Control: 4-way stop

**Nord Avenue and Oak Way**

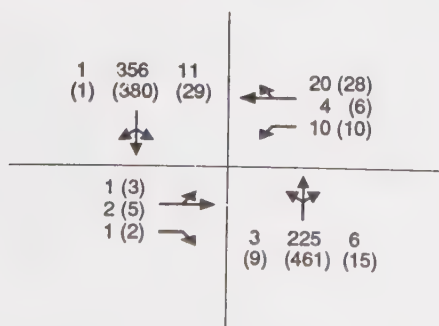
Intersection Control: 1-way stop

**Nord Avenue and West East Avenue**Intersection Control: 4-way stop  
AM/(PM)**Nord Avenue and Kennedy Avenue**

2-way stop

**Nord Avenue and Muir Avenue**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop



### **3 FUTURE TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

This section describes future traffic conditions for interchanges and intersections on State Highways through the City of Chico.

#### **3.1 FUTURE FORECASTS**

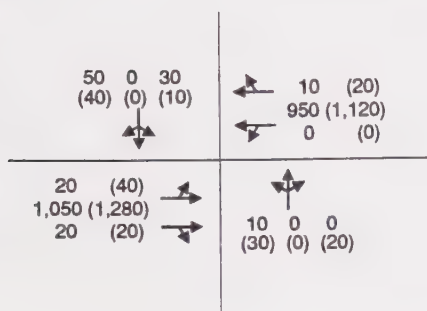
Using the City of Chico's traffic model, peak hour link volumes for each roadway segment adjacent to the intersections were obtained. The traffic forecasts produced by the model were based on the land uses described in Chapter ? of the Draft General Plan and is shown on the General Plan diagram. The future peak hour link volumes were converted into future turning movement counts by correlating existing intersection approach/turning movement percentages with future percentages.

#### **3.2 FUTURE TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**

Future AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes are shown in Figure B-2 for locations selected for detailed analyses. Existing lane configurations are shown. Future lane configurations will be determined as part of the Environmental Impact Report that will be prepared for the Draft General Plan.

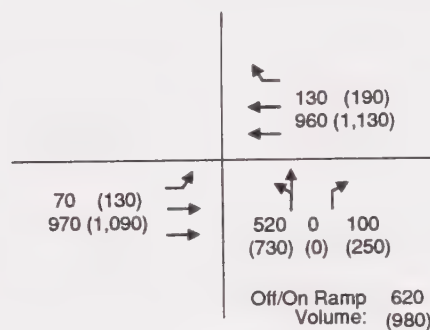
**Tom Polk Avenue and East Avenue**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop  
AM (PM)



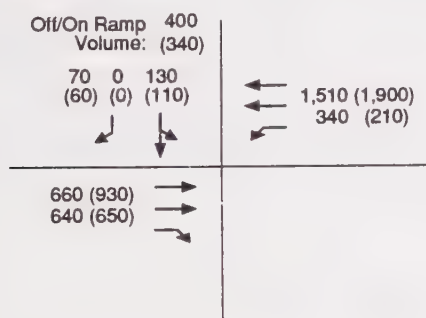
**SR 99 (NB) On/Off Ramps and East Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized



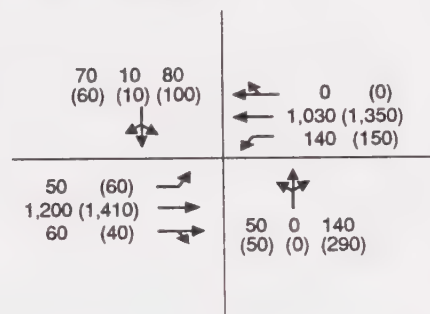
**SR 99 (SB) On/Off Ramps and East Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized



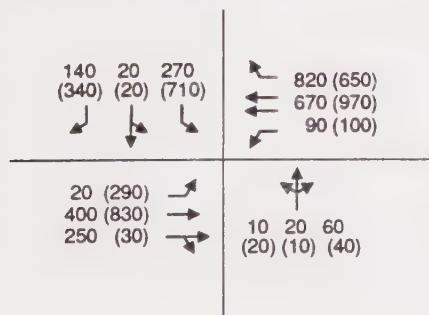
**Connors Court and East Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized



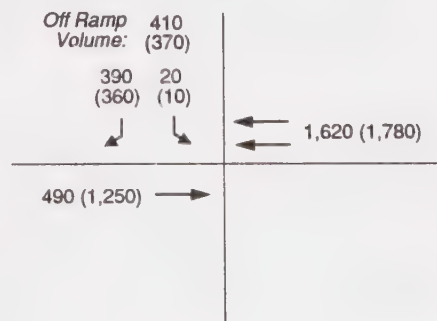
**Mangrove Avenue and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Signalized  
AM (PM)



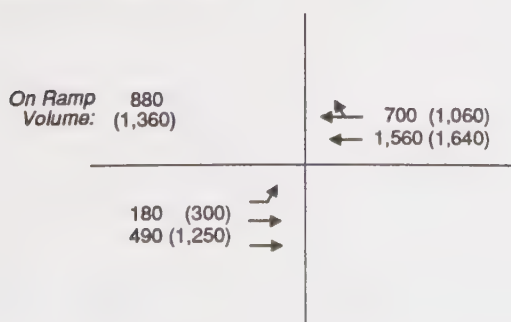
**SR 99 (SB) Off Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop



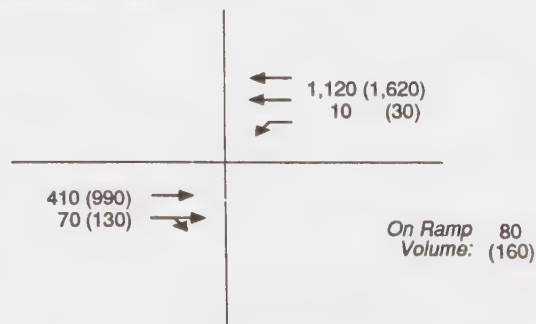
**SR 99 (SB) Loop On Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop



**SR 99 (NB) Loop On Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop

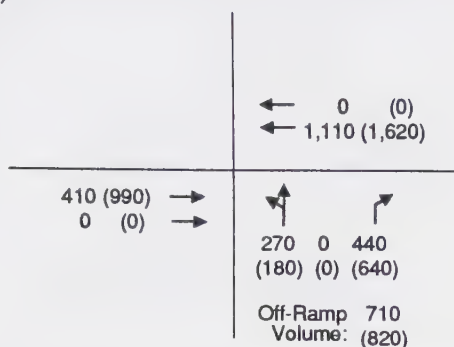




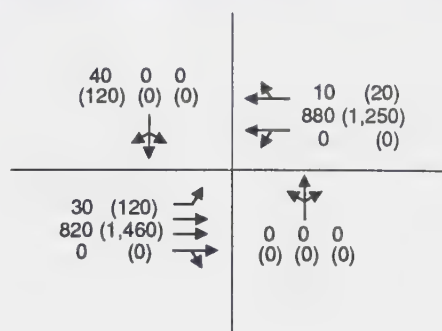
**SR 99 (NB) Off Ramp and Cohasset Road**

Intersection Control: Stop

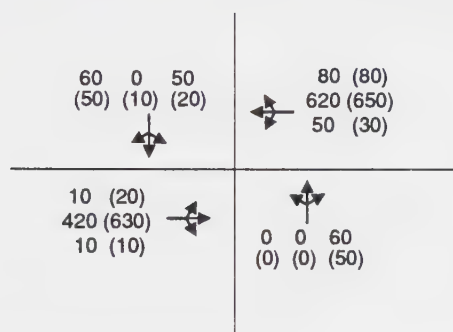
AM/(PM)

**Cohasset Road and Heritage Lane**

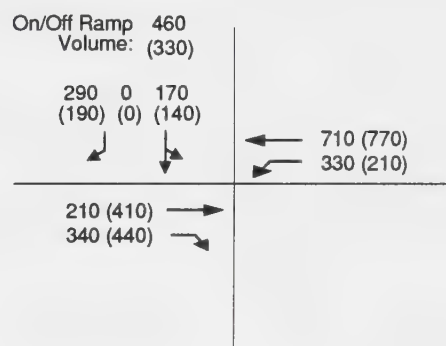
Intersection Control: 2-way stop

**Sheridan Avenue and East First Avenue**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop

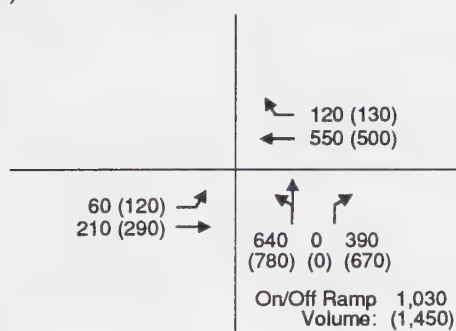
**SR 99 (SB) On/Off Ramps and 1st Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized

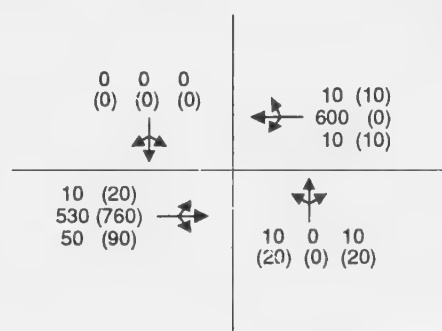
**SR 99 (NB) On/Off Ramps and First Avenue**

Intersection Control: Signalized

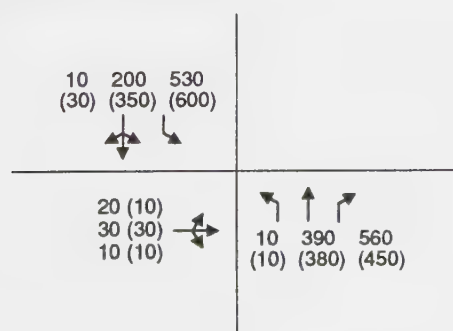
AM/(PM)

**Sarah Avenue and First Avenue**

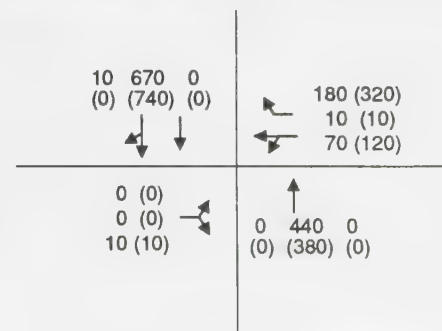
Intersection Control: 1-way stop

**Walnut Street and Ninth Street**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop

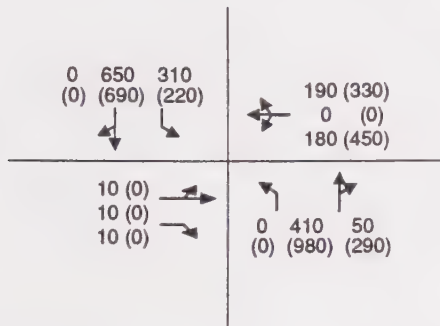
**Walnut Street and 8th Street**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop



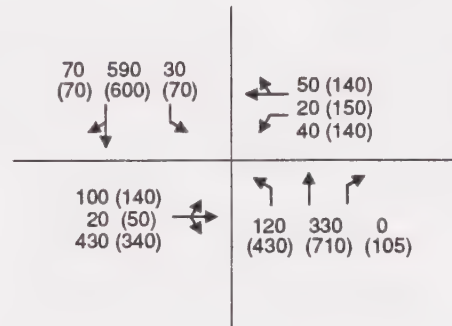
**Nord Avenue and West Sacramento Avenue (N)**

Intersection Control: Signalized  
AM/(PM)



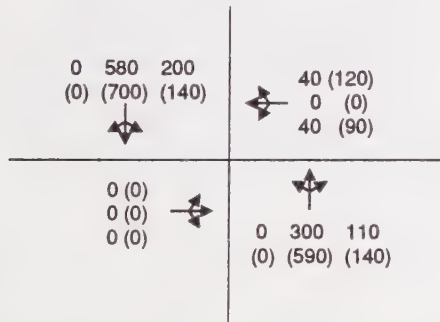
**Nord Avenue and West Sacramento Avenue (S)**

Intersection Control: Signalized



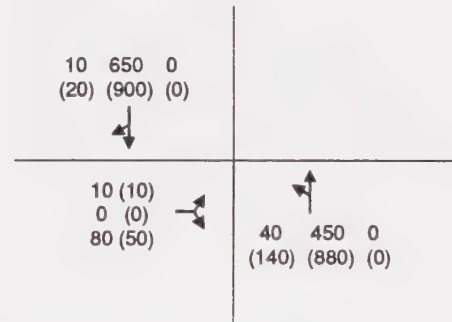
**Nord Avenue and West Eighth Avenue**

Intersection Control: 4-way stop



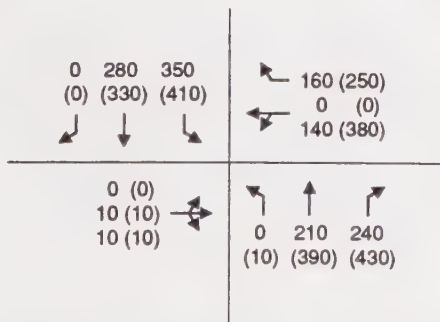
**Nord Avenue and Oak Way**

Intersection Control: 1-way stop



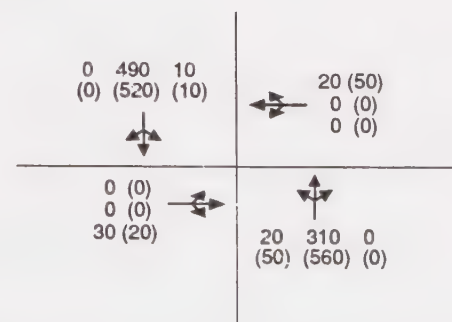
**Nord Avenue and West East Avenue**

Intersection Control: 4-way stop  
AM/(PM)



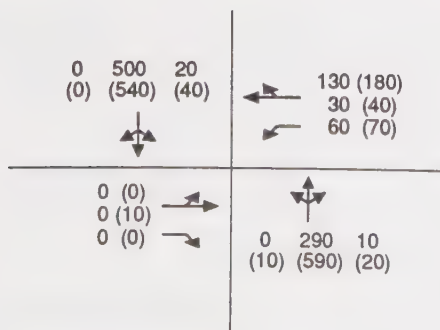
**Nord Avenue and Kennedy Avenue**

2-way stop



**Nord Avenue and Muir Avenue**

Intersection Control: 2-way stop



## 4 ANALYSIS RESULTS

This section presents the results of the analysis of state highways as well as a list of recommended improvements to the General Plan circulation system. The improvements to the circulation system are in two categories: Major Roadway Projects and Priority Bikeway Improvements. The analysis is presented this way in order to lend support to the Chapter 3 Circulation Element and to respond to Caltrans' concerns about specific impacts on the State Highway system. Finally, the effects of implementing a TDM program on reducing impacts on the circulation system created by buildout of the Draft General Plan is presented.

### 4.1 IMPACTS TO SR 99 AND SR 32

Table 3 summarizes the intersection service levels for selected intersections on SR 99 and SR 32 under existing and future traffic conditions.

The results of the operations analysis indicate that for the East Avenue, Cohasset Road, and 1st Avenue interchanges, service levels are expected to deteriorate under future conditions. Intersections that are currently operating at unacceptable service levels will continue to operate unacceptably under future conditions. These include:

- SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue
- Connors Court/East Avenue
- SR 99 Northbound Off Ramp/Cohasset Road
- Sheridan Avenue/1st Avenue
- SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/1st Avenue
- SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/1st Avenue
- Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue South
- Nord Avenue/West 8th Avenue

Additional intersections that would be operating unacceptably under future conditions (not included in the above list) include:

- Tom Polk Avenue/East Avenue
- SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue
- SR 99 Southbound Loop On Ramp/Cohasset Road
- Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue North
- Nord Avenue/Oak Way
- Nord Avenue/Muir Avenue/proposed Eaton Avenue extension

**TABLE B-3**  
**SERVICE LEVELS AT STUDY INTERSECTIONS**

Intersection	Existing (1993) LOS		Future (2013) LOS	
	AM Peak	PM Peak	AM Peak	PM Peak
Tom Polk Avenue/East Avenue	A	B	C	E
SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue*	C	E	F	F
SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/East Avenue*	A	C	D	F
Connors Court/East Avenue	B	E	F	F
Mangrove Avenue/Cohasset Road	A	D	A	D
SR 99 Southbound Off Ramp/Cohasset Road	A	A	A	A
SR 99 Southbound Loop On Ramp/Cohasset Road	A	C	D	F
SR 99 Northbound Loop On Ramp/Cohasset Road	A	A	A	A
SR 99 Northbound Off Ramp/Cohasset Road	D	F	D	F
Heritage Lane/Cohasset Road	A	E	A	D
Sheridan Avenue/First Avenue	F	F	E	F
SR 99 Southbound On-Off Ramps/First Avenue*	C	E	C	E
SR 99 Northbound On-Off Ramps/First Avenue*	E	F	F	F
Sarah Avenue/First Avenue	D	B	D	B
Walnut Street/West 9th Street	A	A	B	B
Walnut Street/West 8th Street	A	A	B	B
Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue North*	B	D	E	F
Nord Avenue/West Sacramento Avenue South*	B	F	F	F
Nord Avenue/West 8th Avenue	B	E	E	F
Nord Avenue/Oak Way	A	A	D	F
Nord Avenue/East Avenue	A	B	A	D
Nord Avenue/Kennedy Avenue	A	C	B	D
Nord Avenue/Muir Avenue	A	A	B	F

Notes: LOS = Level of Service

Shading denotes facilities that exceed the evaluation criteria LOS "D" standard.

\*Indicates intersection is currently signalized.

Source: Korve Engineering, Inc., City of Chico, 1993.



Because the East Avenue and 1st Avenue interchanges with SR 99 are a tight diamond design, the ramp intersections were analyzed as one intersection per Caltrans' requirements for the analysis of a tight diamond interchange. This analysis supports the conclusions stated previously that the East Avenue and 1st Avenue interchanges are highly congested and will continue to experience significant delays under General Plan buildout conditions. Table B-4 shows the service levels for the AM and PM peak hour. Calculation sheets are available for review in the City offices.

**TABLE B-4**  
**SERVICE LEVEL OF TIGHT DIAMOND INTERCHANGES**

SR 99 Interchange	Service Level			
	Existing		Future	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
East Avenue	C	F	F	F
First Avenue	E	F	F	F

## 4.2 INTERCHANGE AND HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

This section presents a discussion of right-of-way and development issues at each interchange along SR 99 through the City of Chico. These issues are also discussed for SR 32.

**SR 99/Eaton Road Interchange.** According to the *Highway 32/Eaton Road Alignment Study* (Prepared for the City of Chico by Heritage Partners, August 1993), the City of Chico examined two circulation alternatives that would impact the SR 99/Eaton Road Interchange. These included a bypass route constructed to expressway standards from SR 32 (at or approximately near Muir Avenue) to SR 99 and a re-alignment of Eaton Road from SR 99 to Cohasset Road.

Additional right-of-way is needed to accommodate a widened Eaton Road and turning lanes and on-ramps, particularly the northbound off-ramp turning west to SR 32 and the southbound on-ramp turning from both the east and the west. Signalization of the ramp intersections and at least one adjacent intersection is identified. The relocation of Hicks Lane eastward should also be analyzed.

To obtain the additional right-of-way, existing parcels and structures will be impacted. The exact right-of-way take would be determined through additional engineering studies of the interchange.

**SR 99/East Avenue Interchange.** Existing conditions at the interchange of East Avenue with SR 99 are operating acceptably. The adjacent intersections of Tom Polk Avenue and Connors Court at East Avenue are operating acceptably except for the intersection of Connors Court at East Avenue during the PM peak hour. Under future conditions, the interchange and adjacent intersections will be operating at service level E or F during the PM peak hour and two of them, Connors Court and the northbound on/off ramps would be operating unacceptably during the AM peak hour. Improvements to the East Avenue interchange will be difficult because right-of-way constraints under the freeway structure prevents the construction of additional lanes.

**SR 99/Cohasset Road Interchange.** Existing conditions at the interchange of Cohasset Road with SR 99 are operating acceptably, except for the northbound off-ramp during the PM peak hour. The adjacent intersections of Mangrove Avenue and Heritage Lane at Cohasset Road are operating acceptably except for the intersection of Heritage Lane at Cohasset Road during the PM peak hour.

Under future conditions, the interchange and adjacent intersections will be operating at acceptable service levels, except for the northbound off-ramp and the southbound loop on-ramp which would be operating at service level F during the PM peak hour. Improvements to the Cohasset Road interchange will be difficult because right-of-way constraints under the freeway structure prevents the construction of additional lanes.

**SR 99/1st Avenue Interchange.** Existing conditions at the interchange of 1st Avenue with SR 99 are operating at unacceptable service levels during the AM and PM peak hour, except for the southbound on- and off-ramps during the AM peak hour. The adjacent intersection of Sheridan Avenue and 1st Avenue is operating at service level F during both the AM and the PM peak hour. On the other side of the interchange, the intersection of Sarah Avenue and 1st Avenue is operating acceptably. The same conditions occur under the future scenario. Improvements to the 1st Avenue interchange will be difficult because right-of-way constraints under the freeway structure prevents the construction of additional lanes.

**SR 99/SR 32 Interchange.** This interchange is operating acceptably under existing conditions. In the future, intersection spacing and number of lanes may need to be reviewed and modified, which could include the cul-de-sac of Fir Street. Access to SR 32 would be provided east of Fir Street, potentially near or at Forest Avenue, but alternatives for

achieving this would need to be analyzed. The availability of right-of-way is not an issue at this interchange and it is anticipated that future any necessary future improvements could be accommodated.

**SR 99/20th Street.** This interchange has been recently reconstructed to accommodate additional lanes and ramps as well as bicycle lanes. It provides access to a regional mall on the east and retail shops on the west. Additional improvements are anticipated for this interchange under future conditions for the southbound and northbound off ramps. If improvements are necessary right-of-way constraints would need to be resolved.

**SR 99/Skyway.** The Skyway interchange with SR 99 is currently being studied as part of the on-going *Southwest Chico Circulation Study*. The interchange is experiencing deficiencies on the northbound and southbound ramps under existing conditions. Additionally, the overpass is experiencing weaving and capacity deficiencies. Under future conditions, these operating conditions can be expected to worsen.

Caltrans is currently conducting a study of the interchange improvements that will provide capacity for the next ten years. The improvements being considered include:

- Restriping structure to four travel lanes,
- Widening Skyway to 4 lanes between Notre Dame Boulevard and Carmichael Country Drive,
- Reconstructing the northbound and southbound exit ramps to a single lane diamond type exit widening to three lanes at the ramp terminal,
- Removing the northbound and southbound exit loop ramps,
- Reconstructing the loop ramp entrance from eastbound Skyway to northbound SR 99,
- Constructing a new entrance loop ramp from westbound Skyway to southbound SR 99,
- Installing signals at ramp intersections, and
- Constructing overpass to accommodate future 8 lanes on SR 999.

The ultimate improvements will include widening the overpass to 6 lanes and widening the southbound exit ramp and the northbound entrance ramp to two lane with auxiliary lane to E. 20th Street. The Southwest Chico Circulation Study will also address the 20 year planning issues at the interchange.

**Potential New Interchanges on SR 99.** As part of the Southwest Chico Circulation Study, a number of circulation alternatives for that area are being analyzed, some of which include an interchange south of the existing Skyway interchange. This interchange



may relieve traffic congestion at the Skyway interchange. The location of the proposed interchange is under consideration. Southgate Avenue is currently an at-grade crossing of SR 99 and is experiencing significant delays on Southgate Avenue. A potential location for the new interchange could be a Southgate Avenue.

**SR 32.** SR 32 between Muir Avenue and West 9th Street is operating acceptably under existing conditions, except for the intersections of Nord Avenue at West Sacramento Avenue South and West 8th Avenue. Caltrans is currently conducting a Project Study Report on SR 32. Preliminary results from that study and the intersection analyses shown in Table 3 for future conditions show the need for a five lane facility between Muir Avenue and West 9th Street.

SR 32 between Walnut Street and SR 99 is operating at acceptable service levels under existing conditions. This will continue to occur under future conditions. Future conditions assume the Eaton Avenue extension and an extension of Walnut Street to East Park Avenue, as shown on the General Plan Diagram. These new roadways provide circulation options to accessing SR 99.

#### **4.3 RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE GENERAL PLAN CIRCULATION SYSTEM**

Tables B-5 and B-6 list the major circulation system improvements and priority bikeway improvements. Table B-5, listing the major circulation system improvements, supports Figure 5-3 in the Draft General Plan Circulation Element - Circulation System.

Table B-5, prioritizing bikeway improvements, is taken from the City of Chico's *1991 Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan* (Prepared by the City of Chico Community Services Department). The City of Chico has developed the plan to promote the use of bicycles in the Chico Urban Area. The plan identified issues, needs and deficiencies, recommended policies, and developed an action plan for the recommended bikeway system.

Bikeway programs and projects are funded through a combination of assured and discretionary funding. The City collects a Transportation Facility Fee prior to the issuance of a building permit. A portion of this fee is for bicycles. Other sources come from the State Bicycle Lane Account, Bicycle License fees, proceeds from the sale of unclaimed bikes, local transportation funds, Proposition 116 funds, ISTEA funds, the National Recreational and Trail Program, and the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Grant program.



#### 4.4 TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

The proposed implementing policies for TDM programs recommend, in addition to the existing City of Chico ordinance, that a goal of 60 percent single occupancy vehicles be achieved in traffic zones with employment of 1,000 or more. The City's circulation system model was run for a representative TDM program. Results showed that slight reductions occurred on impacted roadways, but major improvements were not eliminated.

**TABLE B-5  
MAJOR CIRCULATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS**

Roadway Projects			
	Segment	Limits	Facility Type/Lanes
1	Highway 99	South of Skyway to north of Cohasset Road	Freeway/6 lanes
2	Eaton Road	SHR 32 to the Esplanade	Expressway/4 lanes
3	Skyway Extension	Butte Creek to Highway 99	Major Arterial/4 lanes
4	Midway <sup>1</sup>	East Park Avenue to Entler Avenue	Major Arterial/4 lanes
5	Cohasset Road	East Avenue to Airport	Major Arterial/4 lanes
6	Hicks Lane	East Avenue to Roadway east of Hicks Lane	Major Arterial/4 lanes
7	Roadway east of Hicks Lane	East Avenue to Highway 99	Major Arterial/4 lanes
8	Walnut Street Extension	Walnut Street to Park Avenue	Major Arterial/4 lanes
9	Manzanita Avenue	East Avenue to Highway 32	Major Arterial/4 lanes
10	Highway 32	Highway 99 to Bruce Road	Major Arterial/4 lanes
11	Nord Avenue	Eaton Avenue Extension to 8th/9th Streets	Major Arterial/4 lanes
12	Ivy Street	Present terminus to Walnut Street Extension	Collector/2 lanes
13	Otterson Drive Extension	Present terminus to Walnut Street Extension	Collector/2 lanes
14	Southgate Avenue Extension	Highway 99 to Midway	Major Arterial/4 lanes
15	Bruce Road	Skyway to Highway 32	Major Arterial/ 4 lanes
16	Potter Road Extension	Skyway extension to Highway 32	Minor Arterial/2 lanes

**TABLE B-5**  
**MAJOR CIRCULATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS**

Roadway Projects			
	Segment	Limits	Facility Type/Lanes
17	New Interchange	South of Skyway Interchange	
18	8th Avenue	Esplanade to Nord Avenue	Major Arteria/4 lanes
19	Mariposa Avenue	Eaton Avenue to East Avenue	Collector/2 lanes
20	Cactus Avenue	Eaton Avenue to East Avenue	Collector/2 lanes
21	Ceanothus Avenue	Eaton Avenue to East Avenue	Collector/2 lanes
22	Fremont Street	Notre Dame Boulevard to Bruce Road	Collector/2 lanes
23	Lassen Avenue	Floral Avenue to Marigold Avenue	Collector/2 lanes
24	Springfield Drive	Forest Avenue to Bruce Road	Collector/2 lanes
25	Various modifications to the Highway 99 interchanges (working paper forthcoming)		
<sup>1</sup> Right-of-way constraints			

**TABLE B-6**  
**PRIORITY BIKEWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

Bikeway Projects			
	Segment	Limits	Facility Type
1	Sacramento Northern Railroad	20th Street to Jones Avenue	Class I
2	Southern Pacific Railroad	East Avenue to W. 1st Street	Class I
3	Through Chico Municipal Airport	Chico Municipal Airport to Keefer Road	Class I
4	Sheridan Avenue and Madrone Avenue	North Park Drive and Vallombrosa Avenue	Class I
5	East side of SHR 99	Diversion Channel at Garner Lane and Panama Avenue	Class I
6	East side of SHR 99	Humboldt Avenue to Skyway with connectors to Chico Mall and south of 20th Street	Class I
7	Lindo Channel	Manzanita to Nord Avenue	Class I
8	Nord Avenue/Glenwood/Bidwell Avenue	along creekside greenway	Class I
9	Humboldt Road	Salem Street to west of Forest Avenue	Class I
10	Little Chico Creek	Forest Avenue to Butte Creek Diversion Channel	Class I
11	Butte Creek Diversion Channel	Little Chico Creek to Southern Pacific Railroad abandoned spur	Class I
12	Southern Pacific Railroad abandoned spur	Butte Creek Diversion Channel to Southern Pacific Railroad	Class I
13	Bidwell Park	Along Wildwood to Upper Park Road	Class I
14	Sycamore Creek/Mud Creek Channels	Manzanita Avenue to Bell Road	Class I
<b>Additional Projects</b>			
1	Connect the SR 32 area with downtown and east Chico via an east/west connector.		
2	Incorporate bike lanes on a downtown east-west couplet should two-way streets be converted to one-way.		
3	Provide Class II facilities on new arterial streets. Parking should be prohibited if required to accommodate bike lanes.		
4	Construct necessary shoulder improvements for Class II and III facilities as routine street improvements are made by the City and the County.		
5	Revise, add, or delete traffic controls along bikeways to encourage their use and increase safety, where feasible.		
6	Require developers to provide connections to currently or future bike paths/routes, and convenient access through subdivisions to encourage bicycle use.		
7	Construct Class I or II facilities that will accommodate bicycles to existing and proposed school sites.		
8	Provide covered bike parking facilities in the central business area. Also provide bike racks in the downtown area where warranted by demand.		
9	Establish development standards for multi-family residential, office, commercial and industrial uses to provide covered bicycle parking and employee showers.		
10	Initiate educational/public information programs.		
11	Continue ongoing planning and intergovernmental coordination.		

<sup>1</sup> 1991 Chico Urban Area Bicycle Plan, prepared by the City of Chico Community Services Department.

**TABLE B-7**  
**ROADWAY SERVICE LEVELS WITH AND WITHOUT TDM AT CRITICAL LOCATIONS**

Location	Service Level with TDM			Service Level Without TDM		
	V/C	LOS	DIR	V/C	LOS	DIR
Southgate Avenue Interchange						
Southbound Off-ramp	1.07	F	--	1.11	F	--
Northbound Off-ramp	1.16	F	--	1.24	F	--
Midway between Park Avenue and Entler Avenue	0.98	E	NB	1.10	F	NB
20th Street Interchange						
Southbound Off-ramp	1.05	F	--	1.12	F	--
Northbound Off-ramp	--	D	--	0.94	E	--
Humboldt between Forest Avenue and Notre Dame Boulevard	0.91	E	EB	0.97	E	EB
Notre Dame Boulevard between Humboldt Road and SR 32	1.11	F	NB	1.11	F	NB
SR 32 Interchange						
Southbound Off-ramp	1.03	F	--	1.05	F	--
Northbound Off-ramp	1.30	F	--	1.36	F	--
First Street Interchange						
Northbound Off-ramp	1.09	F	--	1.09	F	--
Manzanita Creek Crossing	0.92	E	SB	1.00	F	SB
Cohasset Road Interchange						
Northbound Off-ramp	0.98	E	--	0.99	E	--
Southbound Off-ramp	0.99	E	--	1.02	F	--
East Avenue Interchange						
Southbound Off-ramp	1.00	F	--	1.03	F	--
Northbound Off-ramp	--	D	--	1.03	F	--
Hicks Lane between Eaton Road and new road	1.03	F	SB	1.09	F	SB
	1.00	F	NB	1.12	F	NB
Cohasset Road between Eaton Road and Thorntree	1.20	F	SB	1.28	F	SB
Cohasset Road between Thorntree and Airport	1.06	F	SB	1.15	F	SB

*Notes:*

*V/C = Volume to Capacity ratio*

*LOS = Level of Service*

*NB, SB, EB, WB = Northbound, Southbound, Eastbound, Westbound*

*TDM = Transportation Demand Management*

*DIR = Direction*

*Source: Korve Engineering, Inc. January 1994*



# **APPENDIX C**

## **FUTURE NOISE CONTOUR DATA (GENERAL PLAN BUILDOUT)**

**PREPARED BY**

**Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
Acoustical Consultants**



**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway		From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.
				60 dB	65 dB	
S.R. 99:						
1		South Boundary	Skyway	748	347	73.1
2		Skyway	East 20th Street	1052	488	75.3
3		East 20th Street	East First Avenue	1486	690	77.6
4		East First Avenue	Cohasset Road	1341	622	76.9
5		Cohasset Road	Lassen Avenue	1178	547	76.1
6		Lassen Avenue	Eaton Road	930	431	74.5
7		Eaton Road	Business 99	547	254	71.1
8		Business 99	North Boundary	674	313	72.4
SR 32:						
9		East Boundary	Humboldt Road	156	73	62.9
10		Humboldt Road	Bruce Road	192	89	64.3
11		Bruce Road	Forest Avenue	213	99	64.9
12		Forest Avenue	East Couplet	188	87	64.1

**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway		From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.
				60 dB	65 dB	
SR 32:						
13	On Eighth	East Couplet	Pine/Cypress Couplet	163	76	63.2
14		Pine/Cypress Couplet	Main Street	107	50	60.4
15		Main Street	Ivy Street	76	35	58.2
16		Ivy Street	Walnut Street	80	37	58.5
S.R. 32:						
17	On Ninth	West Couplet	Ivy Street	86	40	59.0
18		Ivy Street	Main Street	65	30	57.2
19		Main Street	Pine/Cypress Couplet	120	56	61.2
20		Pine/Cypress Couplet	East Couplet	180	84	63.8
21		West Couplet	West 5th Street	212	99	64.9
22		West 5th Street	West Sacramento Ave.	238	110	65.6
23		West Sacramento Ave	East Avenue	239	111	65.7
24		East Avenue	Meridian Road	326	151	67.7
25		Meridian Road	West Boundary	332	154	67.8



**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway		From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.
				60 dB	65 dB	
The Midway:						
26		South Boundary	Hegan Lane	116	54	61.0
27		Hegan Lane	Park Avenue	151	70	62.7
East Park Avenue/ Park Avenue:						
28		S.R. 99	The Midway	202	94	64.6
29		The Midway	20th Street	151	70	62.7
30		20th Street	8th Street	174	81	63.6
Main Street:						
31		Entire length		88	41	59.2
Broadway Street:						
32		Entire length		88	41	59.1
Esplanade:						
33		Big Chico Creek	East 1st Avenue	172	80	63.5
34		East 1st Avenue	East 8th Avenue	158	73	63.0
35		East 8th Avenue	East Avenue	186	86	64.1
36		East Avenue	Eaton Avenue	200	93	64.5

**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway		From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.
				60 dB	65 dB	
Skyway:						
37		Potter Drive	Bruce Road	212	99	64.9
38		Bruce Road	Forest Avenue	169	78	63.4
39		Forest Avenue	S.R. 99	236	109	65.6
Bruce Road:						
40		Skyway	S.R. 32	237	110	65.6
41		S.R. 32	Vallombrosa Road	269	125	66.4
Manzanita Avenue:						
42		Bruce Road	East Avenue	253	117	66.0
East Avenue:						
43		Manzanita Avenue	Mariposa Avenue	90	42	59.3
44		Mariposa Avenue	Cohasset Road	142	66	62.3
45		Cohasset Road	S.R. 99	171	80	63.5
46		S.R. 99	Esplanade	189	88	64.1
47		Esplanade	Cussick Avenue	268	125	66.4
48		Cussick Avenue	S.R. 32	224	104	65.3
West Sacramento Ave.						
49		Entire Length		78	36	58.4

**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway		From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.
				60 dB	65 dB	
Eaton Road:						
50		Cohasset Road	S.R. 99	159	74	63.0
East 20th Street:						
51		Forest Avenue	S.R. 99	326	151	67.7
52		S.R. 99	Whitman Avenue	150	69	62.6
53		Whitman Avenue	Park Avenue	106	49	60.4
East 1st Avenue:						
54		Longfellow	S.R. 99	130	60	61.7
55		S.R. 99	Mangrove Avenue	120	56	61.2
56		Mangrove Avenue	Esplanade	129	60	61.6
Cohasset Road:						
57		Eaton Road	Lupin Avenue	228	106	65.4
58		Lupin Avenue	East Avenue	211	98	64.9
59		East Avenue	S.R. 99	219	102	65.1
Mangrove Avenue:						
60		S.R. 99	5th Avenue	188	87	64.1
61		5th Avenue	1st Avenue	159	74	63.0
62		1st Avenue	Vallombrosa	209	97	64.8

**TABLE I**  
**NOISE CONTOUR DATA**  
**DISTANCE (FEET) FROM CENTER OF ROADWAY**  
**TO L<sub>dn</sub> CONTOURS**

Segment No. /Roadway	From	To	Future		L <sub>dn</sub> @ 100 ft.	
			60 dB	65 dB		
Proposed New Roadways:						
Extension:						
63		Skyway	S.R. 99	166	77	63.3
64		S.R. 99	The Midway	135	63	62.0
East 20th:						
65		Forest Avenue	Bruce Road	70	32	57.7
Eaton Road:						
66		Esplanade	S.R. 32	90	42	59.3
67		Cohasset Road	East Avenue	134	62	61.9
Walnut Street:						
68		West 9th Street	Park Avenue	155	72	62.9



IA Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
 veno Emission Curves      Run Date: 12-20-1993  
 ject Number: 93-257      Run Time: 11:30:10  
 r: Future  
 t Site

SE CONTOURS:

Distance to Ldn Contour, in feet

Segment	Offset	Level, dB				
		75	70	65	60	55
42	0.0	25	54	117	253	545
43	0.0	9	19	42	90	193
44	0.0	14	31	66	142	306
45	0.0	17	37	80	171	369
46	0.0	19	41	88	189	407
47	0.0	27	58	125	268	578
48	0.0	22	48	104	224	483
49	0.0	8	17	36	78	167
50	0.0	16	34	74	159	343
51	0.0	33	70	151	326	703
52	0.0	15	32	69	150	332
53	0.0	11	23	49	106	228
54	0.0	13	28	60	130	281
55	0.0	12	26	56	120	258
56	0.0	13	28	60	129	277
57	0.0	23	49	106	228	491
58	0.0	21	45	98	211	454
59	0.0	22	47	102	219	472
60	0.0	19	41	87	188	406
61	0.0	16	34	74	159	344
62	0.0	21	45	97	209	449
63	0.0	17	36	77	166	358
64	0.0	13	29	63	135	291
65	0.0	7	15	32	70	151
66	0.0	9	19	42	90	193
67	0.0	13	29	62	134	288
68	0.0	15	33	72	155	334

JA Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
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 Object Number: 93-257 Run Time: 11:30:07  
 ar: Future  
 ft Site

USE CONTOURS:

Distance to Ldn Contour, in feet

Segment	Offset	Level, dB				
		75	70	65	60	55
1	0.0	75	161	347	748	1612
2	0.0	105	227	488	1052	2267
3	0.0	149	320	690	1406	3202
4	0.0	134	289	622	1341	2889
5	0.0	110	254	547	1178	2538
6	0.0	93	200	431	930	2003
7	0.0	55	110	254	547	1178
8	0.0	67	145	313	674	1451
9	0.0	16	34	73	156	337
10	0.0	19	41	89	192	414
11	0.0	21	46	99	213	459
12	0.0	19	41	87	188	405
13	0.0	16	35	76	163	351
14	0.0	11	23	50	107	231
15	0.0	8	16	35	76	164
16	0.0	8	17	37	80	172
17	0.0	9	19	40	86	185
18	0.0	7	14	30	65	141
19	0.0	12	26	56	120	258
20	0.0	18	39	84	180	388
21	0.0	21	46	99	212	458
22	0.0	24	51	110	238	512
23	0.0	24	51	111	239	515
24	0.0	33	70	151	326	703
25	0.0	33	71	154	332	714
26	0.0	12	25	54	116	250
27	0.0	15	32	70	151	324
28	0.0	20	44	94	202	435
29	0.0	15	33	70	151	325
30	0.0	17	37	81	174	375
31	0.0	9	19	41	88	189
32	0.0	9	19	41	88	189
33	0.0	17	37	80	172	371
34	0.0	16	34	73	158	340
35	0.0	19	40	86	186	401
36	0.0	20	43	93	200	431
37	0.0	21	46	99	212	457
38	0.0	17	36	78	169	363
39	0.0	24	51	109	236	508
40	0.0	24	51	110	237	512
41	0.0	27	58	125	269	580

WA Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
 Ivenko Emission Curves Run Date: 12-20-1993  
 Object Number: 93-257 Run Time: 11:30:05  
 ar: Future  
 ft Site

ISE LEVELS:

Level	Distance	Offset	Autos	Med.Trk.	Hvy.Trk.	Total
46	100.0	0.0	61.8	55.6	58.6	64.1
47	100.0	0.0	64.8	57.2	59.4	66.4
48	100.0	0.0	63.6	56.0	58.3	65.3
49	100.0	0.0	56.4	49.5	52.1	58.4
50	100.0	0.0	60.7	54.5	57.5	63.0
51	100.0	0.0	66.0	58.4	60.7	67.7
52	100.0	0.0	60.3	54.1	57.1	62.6
53	100.0	0.0	58.0	51.9	54.8	60.4
54	100.0	0.0	59.4	53.2	56.2	61.7
55	100.0	0.0	58.8	52.7	55.6	61.2
56	100.0	0.0	59.3	53.1	56.1	61.6
57	100.0	0.0	63.4	56.5	59.1	65.4
58	100.0	0.0	62.9	56.0	58.6	64.9
59	100.0	0.0	62.7	56.6	59.6	65.1
60	100.0	0.0	61.8	55.6	58.6	64.1
61	100.0	0.0	60.7	54.5	57.5	63.0
62	100.0	0.0	62.4	56.3	59.2	64.8
63	100.0	0.0	60.9	54.8	57.8	63.3
64	100.0	0.0	59.6	53.4	56.4	62.0
65	100.0	0.0	55.3	49.2	52.1	57.7
66	100.0	0.0	56.9	50.8	53.7	59.3
67	100.0	0.0	59.5	53.4	56.4	61.9
68	100.0	0.0	60.5	54.3	57.3	62.9

A Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
 veno Emission Curves      Run Date: 12-20-1993  
 ject Number: 93-257      Run Time: 11:30:01  
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 t Site

SE LEVELS:

el, dB Ldn	Distance	Offset	Autos	Med.Trk.	Hvy.Trk.	Total
1	100.0	0.0	70.3	63.8	68.7	73.1
2	100.0	0.0	72.2	66.3	71.1	75.3
3	100.0	0.0	74.3	68.9	73.6	77.6
4	100.0	0.0	73.4	67.5	73.4	76.9
5	100.0	0.0	72.4	66.6	72.7	76.1
6	100.0	0.0	70.8	65.0	71.2	74.5
7	100.0	0.0	67.4	61.6	67.7	71.1
8	100.0	0.0	68.0	61.5	69.9	72.4
9	100.0	0.0	60.9	54.9	56.2	62.9
10	100.0	0.0	62.2	56.2	57.6	64.3
11	100.0	0.0	62.3	57.4	59.3	64.9
12	100.0	0.0	60.5	57.1	59.7	64.1
13	100.0	0.0	59.6	56.1	58.8	63.2
14	100.0	0.0	56.9	53.4	56.0	60.4
15	100.0	0.0	54.7	51.2	53.8	58.2
16	100.0	0.0	55.0	51.5	54.1	58.5
17	100.0	0.0	55.4	52.0	54.6	59.0
18	100.0	0.0	53.7	50.2	52.8	57.2
19	100.0	0.0	57.6	54.1	56.8	61.2
20	100.0	0.0	60.3	56.8	59.4	63.8
21	100.0	0.0	61.3	57.9	60.5	64.9
22	100.0	0.0	62.1	58.6	61.2	65.6
23	100.0	0.0	61.2	57.1	62.7	65.7
24	100.0	0.0	64.4	58.8	63.7	67.7
25	100.0	0.0	65.3	58.5	62.9	67.8
26	100.0	0.0	58.6	52.5	55.4	61.0
27	100.0	0.0	60.3	54.1	57.1	62.7
28	100.0	0.0	62.2	56.1	59.0	64.6
29	100.0	0.0	60.3	54.2	57.1	62.7
30	100.0	0.0	61.2	55.1	58.1	63.6
31	100.0	0.0	54.9	50.6	56.0	59.2
32	100.0	0.0	54.8	50.6	56.0	59.1
33	100.0	0.0	60.1	54.8	59.7	63.5
34	100.0	0.0	59.5	54.2	59.1	63.0
35	100.0	0.0	60.6	55.3	60.2	64.1
36	100.0	0.0	62.2	56.0	59.0	64.5
37	100.0	0.0	63.2	55.6	57.9	64.9
38	100.0	0.0	61.7	54.1	56.4	63.4
39	100.0	0.0	63.9	56.3	58.6	65.6
40	100.0	0.0	64.0	56.4	58.7	65.6
41	100.0	0.0	64.8	57.2	59.5	66.4
42	100.0	0.0	64.4	56.8	59.1	66.0
43	100.0	0.0	56.9	50.8	53.7	59.3
44	100.0	0.0	59.9	53.8	56.7	62.3
45	100.0	0.0	61.1	55.0	58.0	63.5



A Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
 veno Emission Curves Run Date: 12-20-1993  
 ject Number: 93-257 Run Time: 11:29:59  
 r: Future  
 t Site

UT DATA SUMMARY:

ment	ADT	Day%	Eve%	Nite%	%MT	%HT	Speed	Distance	Offset
46	24200	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
47	23300	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
48	17800	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
49	4750	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	40.0	100.0	0.0
50	18700	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
51	31250	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
52	17040	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
53	10150	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
54	13850	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
55	12200	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
56	13600	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
57	23850	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	40.0	100.0	0.0
58	21250	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	40.0	100.0	0.0
59	30150	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
60	24050	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
61	18750	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
62	28050	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
63	19950	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
64	14600	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
65	5450	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
66	7900	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
67	14400	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
68	17950	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0

A Model RD-77-108: Brown-Buntin Associates, Inc.  
 veno Emission Curves Run Date: 12-20-1993  
 ject Number: 93-257 Run Time: 11:29:55  
 n: Future  
 t Site

UT DATA SUMMARY:

ment	ADT	Day%	Eve%	Nite%	%MT	%HT	Speed	Distance	Offset
1	47071	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.0	5.0	55.0	100.0	0.0
2	75071	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.5	5.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
3	120857	86.0	0.0	14.0	5.0	6.0	55.0	100.0	0.0
4	98571	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.5	7.0	55.0	100.0	0.0
5	78857	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.5	7.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
6	55285	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.5	7.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
7	24928	86.0	0.0	14.0	4.5	7.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
8	29500	86.0	0.0	14.0	3.8	10.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
9	5550	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
10	7550	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	55.0	100.0	0.0
11	13650	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
12	18750	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
13	15150	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
14	8050	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
15	4850	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
16	5200	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
17	5800	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
18	3850	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
19	9550	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
20	17550	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
21	22500	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
22	26650	87.0	0.0	13.0	4.5	2.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
23	22150	87.0	0.0	13.0	3.8	4.2	35.0	100.0	0.0
24	22400	87.0	0.0	13.0	3.8	4.2	45.0	100.0	0.0
25	15350	87.0	0.0	13.0	3.8	4.2	55.0	100.0	0.0
26	11650	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
27	17200	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
28	26750	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
29	17250	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
30	21350	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
31	12950	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	25.0	100.0	0.0
32	12900	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	25.0	100.0	0.0
33	25550	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	30.0	100.0	0.0
34	22350	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	30.0	100.0	0.0
35	28700	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	30.0	100.0	0.0
36	26350	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
37	16400	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
38	11600	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
39	19200	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
40	19400	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
41	23400	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
42	21300	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	45.0	100.0	0.0
43	7900	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0
44	15750	87.0	0.0	13.0	2.5	1.5	35.0	100.0	0.0

## **APPENDIX D**

### **HOUSING ELEMENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS**

This information is taken from the City of Chico Master Environmental Assessment (MEA), Chapter 4, therefore the numbering system in this appendix is tied to the MEA.





## **4 HOUSING**

This section includes technical information that is part of the 1992 adopted Housing Element. The City's Housing Strategy, Housing Goals, Objectives, Policies and Programs (1992-97), which are now in Sections I(2) to I(4) of the Housing Element, will be incorporated into the General Plan, so all policies are in one document.

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In planning for the provision of housing for all present and future Chico residents, the City's primary goal is to provide for a variety of housing types in an atmosphere conducive to the well-being of City residents, and particularly to provide for an adequate supply of housing ranging in cost to meet the demands of students, low and moderate income persons, the special needs of the elderly and disabled, and to provide an opportunity for first-time home buyers. The City's objective must be pursued within the constraints of today's housing market. Factors such as building costs, mortgage interest rates, preservation and conservation of natural resources, provision of sanitary sewers, storm drainage and streets, the provision of other public services such as police and fire protection, school facilities and parks, concern for design, preservation of neighborhoods and historical structures and districts, as well as concern for energy conservation within housing units, all combine to make planning for future housing needs a complex and difficult task. These factors must all be considered in concert with one another. No single item can be emphasized at the expense of another if Chico is to pursue a balanced and realistic approach to the provision of housing for current and future Chico residents.

#### **Community Participation**

In March 1991, the City Council appointed a 14 member technical advisory committee (TAC) to review the existing Housing Element and conduct technical studies necessary to update the element, in accordance with State Housing Law. The TAC membership included individuals from both the public and private sectors representing housing interests. Assisted by the City Housing Office and Planning Division staff, the TAC met monthly to evaluate the success of existing programs, determine current housing needs and develop housing programs designed to meet those needs.

Following release of the 1990 Census income and employment data in May 1992, the TAC completed the draft of the Housing Element update designed to address Chico's housing needs to July 1, 1997. The adoption process included Planning Commission and City Council public hearings and Housing and Community Development review and approval.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **POPULATION**

The City of Chico population increased from 26,603 in 1980 to 40,079 in 1990, which is a 51 percent rate of growth. The growth in the Urban Area was 24 percent during the same period (58,319 to 72,526). The City grew at a faster rate due to political decisions limiting development to larger parcels which can facilitate septic systems.

### **AGE CHARACTERISTICS**

The City of Chico has a relatively young population with a median age of 24.6 years compared to the state median age of 31.5 years. The age group 15-24 years accounts for 35 percent of the City's population and 27 percent in the Urban Area. The presence of the California State University and the Community College are the primary reasons for this situation.

### **ETHNIC POPULATION**

The City's population is predominantly white with only 11 percent of the population identified as non-white. The ethnic composition of the City and Urban Area has remained constant over the last ten years except for the Asian and Pacific Islander group which increased from 355 persons in 1980 to 1,602 persons in 1990 ( a 351 percent increase).

### **STUDENT POPULATION**

The student population is a significant group in the City and the Urban Area. The 1990 Census reports that between the California State University and the Community College, 14,500 students live in the City and 19,973 live in the Urban Area. The City defines the student population as persons between 18 and 24 years of age who have located in the Chico Urban Area to attend school. The housing needs of this group are different than the general population in that shared housing by unrelated individuals is the most common household type. In addition, it is very common for students to overpay (as a percent of income) for housing.

## TENURE

The City has a homeownership rate of 33 percent compared to 56 percent for the state, reflecting its large student population. The rate has declined since 1970. The 1990 Census reports that 47 percent of the City's housing stock is single family units and approximately 30 percent of the single family stock is rented. The rental market is a very mobile market evidenced by the fact that of the 21,000 households that reported they had moved into their unit after 1985, 75 percent were renters.

## AFFORDABILITY

The affordability in the rental market is summed up very distinctly by the 1990 Census reporting that for the 9,789 renter households earning less than \$20,000 (the median household income is \$19,095) 6,926 (71 percent) were paying more than 35 percent of their income for rent. For the 4,583 very low income households, earning less than \$10,000, the number paying more than 35 percent of their income for rent was 3,984 (87 percent). The application of the overpayment to single family mortgages is less direct because of the tax advantages of mortgage interest. For the very low income category, 371 (49 percent) out of 756 households were paying more than 35 percent of their income on a mortgage. For the group between 50 percent of the median and the median, the percentage paying over 35 percent was 32 percent.

## NEW UNIT CONSTRUCTION

**Single Family.** The construction of single family units has been increasing at a relatively constant pace since 1980. Variations occurred in response to interest rate fluctuation and other market changes. A total of 1,726 single family units were built during the period 1981 to 1991.

**Multi-Family.** The new construction of multi-family units has fluctuated dramatically. During 1990 only 123 units were constructed. In 1991 849 units were built. The 1991 production caused the multi-family vacancy rate to rise from 2 percent to 6 percent. Multi-family construction is more dependent on the economy than single family construction. Currently builders are unable to secure construction financing and very little multi-family construction is expected until the recession ends. This could result in the vacancy rate falling again.

## BELOW MARKET HOUSING PRODUCTION

**Single Family.** The City has worked with the local nonprofit housing agency to produce affordable home purchase opportunities for lower income families through self-help housing programs. Unfortunately the number of units is small, only 20 per year on average



during the last three years. The private sector is still unable to build single family homes for less than \$110,000, except in very limited numbers. The average price for the entry level market is between \$115,000 and \$135,000. The future ability to produce affordable single family homes is a definite goal and the City is pursuing a variety of techniques to assist the developers.

**Multi-Family.** The ability to produce affordable rental housing varies by the targeted rent levels. The private market is able to produce rental housing affordable to households earning above 80 percent of the median income. Many of the existing rental units are affordable to households earning over 70 percent of the median income and this could continue if the vacancy rate remains at or above 5 percent. The strong unmet need is for units affordable to households earning 50 percent or less of the local median income. To produce units for this group, federal and/or state housing program assistance is a necessity. The City's resources are simply not sufficient. The trend is to reduce the level of funding available at the State and Federal level which will reduce the City's ability to target the very low income households.

## REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN

All the characteristics mentioned above come together in the Regional Housing Allocation Plan for the City. The Plan is produced by the Butte County Association of Governments and is for the period 1991-1997. The Plan projects housing unit production needs and distributes the need by four income levels. The Plan for the City is:

	<u>Very Low</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Above Moderate</u>	<u>Total</u>
Goal 1991-1997	1,033	771	872	1,485	4,161
Annual Goal	148	110	125	212	595

The City is attempting to increase the homeownership rate from the current 33 percent to 40 percent by 1997. Based on this goal, the quantified objectives by tenure are:

	<u>Very Low</u>	<u>Lower</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Above Moderate</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Rent/Own</u>	<u>Rent/Own</u>	<u>Rent/Own</u>	<u>Rent/Own</u>	<u>Rent/Own</u>
1991-1997	1,033/0	694/77	610/262	149/1,336	2,486/1,675
Annual	148/0	99/11	87/38	21/191	355/239

As mentioned above, the ability of the City to meet these goals is a function of local efforts through the programs detailed in this element, the performance of the local, state, and federal economies, and the commitment of the state and federal governments to provide additional financial resources for the lower and very low income households.



## 4.2 HOUSING NEEDS

### Population Characteristics

#### POPULATION TRENDS

Population levels and projections are summarized in Table 4-1. Population figures for 1980 and 1990 are based on U.S. Census data, while for other years, State Department of Finance estimates or special census results are reported. Projected population is given for three areas: the City, the Chico Urban Area and the entire County, and at three growth rates. The most significant figures are those projecting growth for the Chico Urban Area, which, even at a 2 percent rate of growth, predict a growth of nearly 35 percent between 1990 and 2005. Within the City limits Chico's population growth between 1970 and 1980 was 35 percent. Between 1980 and 1990 it increased by 51 percent. For the twenty year period, this growth very nearly equals an annual growth rate of 3.7 percent, resulting in more than doubling of the City population during this time.

The majority of growth in the Chico Urban Area is likely to result from immigration. Natural population increase (births minus deaths) will have a significant effect. For the ten-year period, 1990 through 2000, natural population increase is projected at 5,900 persons while total population increase is projected at 16,456. Natural increase accounts for 36 percent of the total increase. Net migration will account for growth of approximately 1,000 persons per year or 64 percent.

Historically, annexation has added only, on average, 50 dwellings per year during the 1980's. However, in light of a State mandate that all residential units currently using septic systems connect to the City sanitary sewer system by 1996, annexation could significantly increase the City's population during the term of the Housing Element.

#### AGE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 4-2 reports the age characteristics of the City of Chico and Chico Urban Area population. Due to the influence of the large student population within the City limits, the median age is 24.6 years (state-wide median age is 31.5 years and for Butte County, 33.8 years). The age group "15-24 years" accounts for 35 percent of the City's population, in contrast to 27 percent and 17 percent in the Urban Area and County, respectively. Persons over 65 years account for 9 percent of the City population, 11 percent of the Urban Area population, and 17 percent of the County population.

**TABLE 4-1**  
**POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS**  
**Historical Growth Trends**

Year	City of Chico	Chico Urban Area*	Butte County
1970	19,580	43,682	101,969
1980	26,603	58,319	143,851
1985	31,292	66,000	160,970
1986	32,491	--	164,002
1987	33,629	--	167,113
1988	35,399	--	172,363
1989	37,539	--	176,738
1990	40,079	72,526	182,120

**POPULATION GROWTH PROJECTIONS\*\***  
**Chico Urban Area Growth Rates**

Year	2%	2.5%	3%
1990	72,526	72,526	72,526
1995	80,075	82,057	84,078
2000	88,409	92,839	97,469
2005	97,610	105,039	112,993

**BUTTE COUNTY GROWTH RATES**

Year	2%	2.5%	3%
1990	182,120	182,120	182,120
1995	201,075	206,052	211,127
2000	222,003	233,129	244,754
2005	245,109	263,764	283,737

Sources: 1970,1980, 1990- Census, February 1992. All Others Through 1989 - State of California Department of Finance Estimates.

\*The Chico Urban Area includes the City of Chico and all unincorporated property within the Chico Sphere of Influence

\*\*Growth rates reflect ranges which are consistent with historical patterns.

**TABLE 4-2**  
**AGE CHARACTERISTICS 1990**

	City of Chico		Chico Urban Area		Total Butte County	
	number	percent of total	number	percent of total	number	percent of total
Total Persons	40,079	100%	72,526	100%	182,120	100%
Under 5 Years	2,309	6%	4,695	6%	12,336	7%
5-9 Years	2,283	6%	4,720	7%	13,073	7%
10-14 Years	1,773	4%	3,848	5%	11,389	6%
15-19 Years	4,113	10%	6,037	8%	12,549	7%
20-24 Years	10,271	26%	13,835	19%	18,644	10%
25-34 Years	7,166	18%	12,816	18%	26,361	15%
35-44 Years	5,085	13%	9,934	14%	25,286	14%
45-54 Years	1,984	5%	5,058	7%	15,798	9%
55-64 Years	1,494	4%	3,850	5%	15,248	8%
65-74 Years	1,846	5%	4,165	6%	18,324	10%
75 Years & Over	1,755	4%	3,568	5%	13,112	7%

Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

Different segments of the population may have varying housing needs. In the next sections, the needs of specific groups will be addressed.

### ETHNIC POPULATION

The ethnic characteristics of the Chico Urban Area population are summarized in Table 4-3. Approximately 11 percent of the City of Chico population is identified as non-white, while for the total Urban Area that figure is 9 percent. The minority population identified as "Hispanic origin" comprises about 8.7 percent of the Chico population and 7.8 percent of the Urban Area population (compared to 7.5 percent for the entire county). Ethnic groups do not appear to be concentrated in any single neighborhood(s), but do appear to be concentrated in neighborhoods reflected by census tracts with lower median incomes. Total ethnic population, including nonwhite and white-Spanish origin, accounts for 15 percent (6,135 persons) of the Chico population, 14 percent (10,067) of the Urban Area population and 13 percent (23,818) of the County population.

**TABLE 4-3**  
**ETHNIC CHARACTERISTICS**

TOTAL PERSONS						
	City of Chico		Chico Urban Area		Total Butte County	
	number	percent of total	number	percent of total	number	percent of total
Total Persons	40,079	100%	73,433	100%	182,120	100%
White	35,858	89%	66,844	91%	165,200	91%
Black	731	2%	1,123	2%	2,361	1%
American Indian Eskimo & Aleut	439	1%	837	1%	3,241	2%
Asian & Pacific Islander	1,602	4%	2,325	3%	5,170	3%
Other Races	1,449	4%	2,304	3%	6,148	3%
Hispanic Origin(1)	3,484	9%	5,697	8%	13,606	7.5%

Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

(1) 1990 Census did not classify Hispanic Origin in a separate category. Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race.

## STUDENT POPULATION

According to the 1990 Census there were 19,578 students in the Greater Chico Area who were enrolled in college (California State University, Chico or Butte Community College). 73 percent (14,356) of these students live within the City of Chico. Students represent 36 percent of the City population, 25.5 percent of the Chico Urban Area population. Table 4-4 summarizes growth in enrollment at California State University, Chico since 1960 and identifies the rate of the growth over the period.



**TABLE 4-4**  
**CSUC ENROLLMENT**

Year	Full-Time Equivalent	Actual Enrollment	% Actual Enrollment Growth Over Previous 5 Years
1970	9,661	10,108	43%
1975	11,875	13,138	23%
1980	12,557	13,873	5%
1985	13,018	14,667	4%
1990	14,437	16,641	14%

Source: California State University, Chico

Butte Community College is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Chico in Butte County. Butte College recorded an enrollment of approximately 12,910 during the Spring 1991 semester. Due to factors including students residing throughout Butte County and surrounding counties, the number of students residing at home, and the number of part time students, this student enrollment has a significantly smaller impact on Chico housing needs. If tuition costs at CSUC continue to increase and enrollment remains fixed or decreases due to budget constraints, more students may choose to move to the Urban Area to attend Butte College before transferring to CSUC or other four year colleges.

#### DISABLED POPULATION

Housing needs of the disabled can be classified using three categories:

1. Disabled, requiring institutional or group care facility housing. The 1990 Census identified 729 persons within the City of Chico living in institutional housing. For the Chico Urban Area there were 787 persons or 1.1 percent of the total population.

**TABLE 4-5**  
**PERSONS LIVING IN INSTITUTIONAL HOUSING**

	<u>City of Chico</u>	<u>Chico Urban Area</u>
Nursing Homes	658	716
Mental Hospitals	8	8
Other Institutions	<u>63</u>	<u>63</u>
TOTAL	729	787

Source: 1990 Census, April 1992

2. Disabled persons without a need for special adaptation of housing. The number of people in this category is unknown. Since housing needs for this group are not specific to their disability, other programs/policies of the City address their divergent needs.
3. Disabled persons whose disability requires housing to be constructed and/or modified specifically to meet their needs. The number of persons needing housing in this category is unknown. The 1990 Census identified 5,549 persons in the Greater Chico Area as having mobility limitations (7.3 percent of the population). The City provides programs to meet the needs of this group through its "Barrier Free" housing programs and through its housing rehabilitation program.

In addition to the City's housing programs, Title 25 of the California Administrative Code requires all new multifamily residential construction to provide a minimum 5 percent of the total units as handicap accessible and all first floor units as handicap available. Accessible units conform to all handicap standards, including door and restroom hardware, hallway and door clearances and access. Adaptable units meet similar requirements except that door and restroom hardware is not required, but units must be constructed to allow for installation of such hardware.

Other disabled include those persons with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Current information on the number of AIDS patients in the Chico area is not available. Information is only available for Butte County as a whole. According to the Butte County Public Health Department, there were 65 reported cases of AIDS in Butte County in 1991. Housing needs of this group progress from subsidized existing housing in the initial stages of the disease, to need for long-term terminal care facility placement at the critical stages of the disease. Due to increased public awareness, more accurate information on the number of AIDS patients in the Chico area should become available in the future.

### HOMELESS POPULATION

The homeless can be identified in one of three primary categories. The first consists of transients who do not have a permanent residence and are in need of shelter while they are temporarily in the area. The second category includes those persons who are in transit but became stranded in the area due to an emergency (automobile breakdown, illness, etc.) and require housing until they can rectify their problem and resume their trip. The final group consists of those persons who are residents of the community but have been displaced from their housing by fire, eviction, or other action. This group requires housing for the period it takes to secure alternate permanent housing. The 1990 Census identified 127 homeless within the Chico Urban Area. The National Guard Armory located at the Silver Dollar Fairgrounds houses homeless persons during the winter months in Chico when temperatures drop below 40°F and on rainy days when temperatures dip below 50°F. The local Salvation Army operates this facility and indicates that between 30 to 40 persons are served each day the shelter is open.

### EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The 1990 Census reported employment characteristics for the Chico Urban Area. Of the total labor force of 38,551 less than 4 percent were employed in agriculture or forestry. 13 percent were employed in industrial/manufacturing positions (down 2 percent from 1980), 33 percent were employed in executive/professional categories. Unemployment during the 1980's has declined steadily from an average annual high of 10 percent in 1980 to 7.9 percent in 1989 for the Chico Urban Area. The City of Chico experienced an unemployment rate of 9.2 percent in 1989. Table 4-6 summarizes the occupational characteristics reported in the 1990 Census.

Over the last decade, employment has increased by 9,578 positions. The State of California Employment Development Department forecasts job growth at 1.7 percent or approximately 550 new jobs per year in the Chico Urban Area through 1993.

**TABLE 4-6  
OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Occupation	City of Chico		Chico Urban Area		Total Butte County	
	number	percent of total	number	percent of total	number	percent of total
Executive, Administrative, Managerial	1745	9.5%	3982	11.2%	6518	8.9%
Professional Specialty	3164	17.1%	6623	18.6%	9006	12.3%
Technician & Related Support	585	3.2%	1188	3.3%	1762	2.4%
Sales	2649	14.4%	4821	13.6%	8565	11.7%
Administrative Support, Including Clerical	3024	16.4%	5532	15.6%	10,104	13.8%
Private Household	131	.8%	306	.9%	445	.6%
Protective Service	282	1.6%	426	1.2%	957	1.3%
Service, Except Protective Service & Household	2992	16.2%	4850	13.6%	9226	12.6%
Farming, Forestry, & Fishing	571	3.1%	1263	3.6%	4323	5.9%
Precision Production, Craft & Repair Services	1644	9%	3322	9.3%	8348	11.4%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	654	3.6%	1453	4.1%	8787	12.0%
Transportation & Material Moving	377	2.1%	833	2.3%	2786	3.8%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers & Laborers	541	3%	955	2.7%	2347	3.2%
<b>Total Employed Persons over 16</b>	18,488		35,602		73,174	
<b>Total Persons in Work Force Over 16</b>	20,350		38,551		79,193	
<b>Unemployed</b>	1,862	9.2%	2,949	7.7%	6,019	7.6%

Source: 1990 Census, May 1992

As projected population increases (minimum of 2 percent) are significantly greater than projected employment increases, employment gains would not result in a notable increase in housing demand over that expected through population increases. However, it is possible that the demand for lower cost housing will increase, reflecting the difference between population and employment increases, the preponderance of new jobs in the retail trade and sales sectors, and likely correspondence to decreased household income.



Should a major new employer locate in the community (250+ jobs), it is likely that an impact on housing would result. Such an impact would likely be evidenced by a short term decrease in vacancy rates and a long term market response.

## Household Characteristics

### HOUSEHOLD POPULATION

The combination of population and housing data provides the basic statistics necessary to examine the characteristics of households in the Chico Urban Area. That basic information is contained in Table 4-7 as reported by the Census in 1980 and 1990, and projected for the year 2000.

**TABLE 4-7**  
**BASIC HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**

	1980 (Census)		1990 (Census)		2000 (Est.) <sup>3</sup>	
	City	Urban Area <sup>1</sup>	City	Urban Area	City	Urban Area
Total Population	26,603	58,319	40,079	72,526	53,863	92,839
Persons in Household	24,141	55,712	36,980	69,331	49,698	88,750
Persons In Other <sup>2</sup>	2,462	2,607	3,099	3,195	4,165	4,090
Housing Units	11,086	24,716	16,295	30,063	21,899	38,483
Households	10,533	23,362	15,508	28,853	19,073	36,934
Persons Per Household	2.29	2.38	2.38	2.40	2.38	2.40
Vacancy Factor (%)	4.98%	5.30%	5.15%	3.34%	5.00%	5.00%

<sup>1</sup> Urban area includes total of City and unincorporated areas within City of Chico Sphere of Inference

<sup>2</sup> Includes group quarters and institutions.

<sup>3</sup> Assumes a 2.5 percent Urban Area growth rate and a 3 percent growth rate for the City. The affect of annexation on the year 2000 figures for the City have not been estimated.

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census, Department of Finance Estimates.

Household characteristics also include much more than the basic statistics presented above. It is that information the following section presents. An examination of these additional household characteristics can result in the identification of special housing needs and conditions which require separate consideration.

### HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Household composition identifies whether the household consists of related members or not. Because of the significant differences in household composition between the City of Chico and the unincorporated area of Chico, the data is presented separately. As Table 4-8 demonstrates, the City of Chico has a larger proportion of non-family households as compared to the unincorporated area.

**TABLE 4-8**  
**CHICO URBAN AREA HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (1990)**

	City of Chico	Unincorporated	Urban Area
Total Persons	40,079	32,447	72,526
In Households	36,980	32,351	69,331
Heads of Household	15,508	13,345	28,853
Family Households	7,060	8,197	15,257
Non-Family Households	8,448	5,148	13,596
Persons in Group Quarters	3,099	96	3,195
Median Household Size	2.38	2.42	2.40

Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Table 4-9 presents income characteristics for the City of Chico and the Chico Urban Area. The City's income profile is skewed to lower levels. This characteristic is commonly attributed to the large number of student households with low household incomes, although specific statistical data to support this position is not currently available.

**TABLE 4-9**  
**INCOME**

	City of Chico		Chico Urban Area	
	number	percent of total	number	percent of total
Total Households	15,481	100%	30,285	100%
Less Than \$5,000	1,395	9%	2,133	7%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	2,507	16.2%	4,174	13.8%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2,287	14.8%	3,761	12.4%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	1,858	12%	3,415	11.3%
\$20,000 - \$24,999	1,453	9.4%	2,838	9.4%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	2,159	14%	4,641	15.3%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	1,954	12.6%	4,472	14.8%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	1,233	8%	3,090	10.2%
\$75,000 - or more	635	4%	1,761	5.8%
Median Income, City of Chico = \$19,005		Median Income CUA = \$22,449		
Source: 1990 Census, May 1992				

### HOUSEHOLDS WITH ELDERLY

An elderly household, for the purpose of this report, is defined as a household with one or more person 65 years of age or over. Elderly persons may be in need of special housing considerations due to fixed incomes, disability, or lack of mobility. In the Chico Urban Area 5,160 households (17.9 percent) include at least one person over the age of 65 years (7,733 persons). Of the total elderly population, 7,006 live in 4,879 households and the remaining 727 are occupants of group facilities. Although the elderly only make up 9 percent of the City of Chico population, because of the high incidence of single-person households, within the Chico City limits there are 2,211 elderly households which represent 14 percent of all households. In the Planning Area 10.6 percent of the population (consisting of elderly) make up almost 18 percent of the households.

**TABLE 4-10**  
**ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS**

	<u>City of Chico</u>		<u>Chico Urban Area</u>	
Total Population	40,079	100%	72,526	100%
Elderly Population	3,612	9%	7,733	10.6%
Total Households	15,508	100%	28,853	100%
Elderly Households	2,211	14%	5,160	17.9%
Elderly in Group Homes	670	1.7%	727	1%

Source: 1990 Census , February 1992

The incidence of homeownership is relatively greater among the elderly.

OWNERS: 65% (1344 hshlds)

RENTERS: 35% ( 709 hshlds)

The City's housing rehabilitation program is designed to help elderly homeowners remain in their homes as long as their independence allows.

#### **SINGLE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

According to the 1990 Census, in the Chico Urban Area there are 2,695 households with a single-head of household and children under 18 years of age. This represents 9.3 percent of all households in the area. 1,497 of these were located within the City limits, accounting for 9.7 percent of all City households. The majority are headed by women, but 19 percent (519) are headed by men.

Therefore, the greatest need is experienced by female headed households with children. This is further evidenced by the recent trend in the Aid to Families With Dependent Children program (AFDC) case loads. The figures below are for Butte County but the trend is similar for Chico.



	1989	1990	1991
AFDC TOTAL	17,620	18,936	19,850
ADULTS	6,381	6,772	7,032
CHILDREN	11,239	12,164	12,818

The rate of growth in AFDC cases exceeds the overall population growth rate. The reduction in benefits from State budget policy is creating an even greater hardship for these families.

The best housing assistance format for single female headed households is the Section 8 Rental Assistance program. The program insures that the family will only pay 30 percent of their income on housing expenses. The Butte County Housing Authority competes for Section 8 Vouchers and Certificates each year and approximately 35 percent are used in Chico.

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**TABLE 4-11**  
**SINGLE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

	<u>City of Chico</u>	<u>Chico Urban Area</u>
Total Households	15,508	28,853
Single Headed Households	1,497	2,695-----(-9.3%)
Single Female	1,232	2,176
Single Male	265	519

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Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

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In 1990, the mean income for a Single Female-Head Households (SFHH) was \$29,144 (CUA) (\$33,654 City). 39 percent of all SFHH have incomes below poverty level in the CUA (44 percent for the City of Chico). There is a significant difference in income levels for SFHH without children and those with children. For SFHH with children the mean income was \$15,765 (54 percent of the income of SFHH without children) for the CUA and \$13,590 (40 percent of the income of SFHH without children) in the City of Chico.

For Single Male-Head Households (SMHH), the income gap between those households having children or not was significantly less (\$3,000 in the CUA; \$7,000 in the City). Eighteen percent of SMHH have incomes below the poverty level in the CUA (27.5 percent in the City).

### FARMWORKER HOUSEHOLDS

The majority of agricultural crops in the Chico area are low labor intensive production, such as rice and almonds. It is estimated that there are fewer than 100 farmworker households within the City limits. Currently 47 housing units are provided specifically for occupancy by farmworkers. The number of farmworker households in Chico is not expected to increase and may decline in response to a general weakening of agriculture in the area and increased housing opportunities in the more agriculturally oriented surrounding communities (Gridley, Hamilton City, Orland, Corning).

### LARGE FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

Within the City of Chico 6.5 percent of all households (a total of 1,002 households) consist of 5 or more persons. 869 of these are family households (87 percent) and 133 are nonfamily households. (13 percent) The Chico Urban Area is of similar composition, with 6.8 percent of all households (1,953) consisting of 5 or more persons.

**TABLE 4-12**  
**LARGE FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS**

	<u>City of Chico</u>		<u>Chico Urban Area</u>	
Total Households	15,508	100%	28,853	100%
Total Household with 5 or more persons	1,002	6.5%	1,953	6.8%
Family Households with 5 or more persons	869	87%	1,787	92%
Non-Family Households with 5 or more persons	133	13%	166	8%

Source: 1990 Census, May 1992

Whereas large family households represent only 6.5 percent of all households their needs are significant. An insufficient number of 4 and 5 bedroom units leads to overcrowding situations. Tenure rates among large households reflect the City's overall tenure rate:

RENTERS	60%
OWNERS	40%

The Butte County Housing Authority has been receiving Section 8 rental assistance for larger households. The City recently provided financial assistance to a subsidized rental project that contained 3 and 4 bedroom units. Affordable homeownership is more difficult to achieve.

The incidence of large households is significantly less in Chico compared with 14.3 percent of households statewide. Based on statistics relating to overcrowding and size of housing units, it does not appear that large households are experiencing difficulty in obtaining adequate housing.

### OVERCROWDING

Overcrowding is commonly defined as any household containing more than 1.00 persons per room. The 1990 Census reported 1,304 households where overcrowding existed (according to this definition) in the Chico Urban Area. This represents 4.5 percent of the households. Of these 734 (56 percent) were within the City limits, accounting for 4.7 percent of the City's households. These figures represent a significant increase from 1980 Census information. In both cases the increases are greater than 100 percent. Many of these units may be student occupied, having more than one person per room to reduce housing costs. The Urban Area and City figures indicate that overcrowded units are broadly distributed throughout the Urban Area.

To meet the needs of existing and projected larger households the City provides assistance to first time homebuyers. Families with over 4 persons in the household are eligible for an additional \$1000 per household member in excess of four.

The City's housing rehabilitation program allows bedroom additions to meet the needs of a growing family or one that bought too small a home because it was all they could afford.

In conjunction with the policies of HCD and the State Tax Allocation Committee the City encourages multifamily projects with 3 and 4 bedrooms that serve large families.

## Housing Characteristics

### HOUSING DEVELOPMENT—HISTORIC TRENDS

Table 4-13 provides a summary of the historical development of housing in the City. Within the incorporated limits, between 1980 and 1990, 5,213 housing units were added to the housing stock, for a total of 16,295 units. Of these 5,213 new units, 3,679 were located in multiple residential projects accounting for 71 percent of the increase. In 1980, multiple family units comprised 45 percent of all housing units, up from 30 percent in just a decade. By 1990 multiple family units made up more than 53 percent of the total housing in the City. It is worth noting that approximately 10 percent of the increase in housing units over the decade was attributable to the annexation of existing housing units.

**TABLE 4-13**  
**CITY OF CHICO**  
**HOUSING DEVELOPMENT—HISTORIC TRENDS**

Year	Total Units	Single Family Residences	Multi. Family Residential		Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Vacant	
	number	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	% of total
1960	5,432	4,082	75%	1,350	25%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.4%
1970	6,585	4,655	70%	1,930	30%	3,134	47.6%	3,147	47.8%	4.6%
1980	11,082	6,094	55%	4,988	45%	3,893	35.2%	6,630	59.8%	5.0%
1990	16,295	7,628	47%	8,667	53%	5,096	31.3%	10,412	63.9%	4.8%

Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

Table 4-14 contrasts housing characteristics between the City and the unincorporated area, and summarizes for the entire Urban Area. Housing units in the unincorporated area of Chico are more commonly single family residential with a significantly higher incidence of owner occupancy.



**TABLE 4-14**  
**CITY AND URBAN AREA**  
**HOUSING TYPE AND OCCUPANCY (1990)**

	Total Units	Single Family Residences		Multi Family Residential Units		Mobile Homes		Owner Occupied	
	number	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total	number	% of total
City of Chico	16,295	7,628	47%	8,145	50%	303	2%	5,096	31.3%
Unincorporated Area	13,768	8,381	60%	3,790	27%	1,778	13%	7,484	54%
Chico Urban Area	30,063	16,009	53%	11,935	40%	2,081	7%	12,580	41.8%

Source: 1990 Census, February 1992

### OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

Tables 4-13 and 4-14 include occupancy characteristics of Chico Urban Area housing. Table 4-13 reflects a decrease in the percentage of total housing units which are owner occupied. In 1980, 35.2 percent of all units within the City were owner occupied; by 1990 this figure had fallen to 31.3 percent. However, the percentage of owner occupied single family residences has remained fairly constant at 64 percent for 1980 and 67 percent for 1990. In the unincorporated area, the percentage of owner occupied residences is about 54 percent of the total units or 89 percent of the single family residences. For the total Urban Area, owner occupancy is 41.8 percent. While the share of housing units occupied by owners has shown a small loss, there was a net increase in the number of owner occupied housing units from 3,893 in 1980 to approximately 5,096 in the City in 1990.

### NEW UNIT CONSTRUCTION

Table 4-15 reflects the development of housing units for 1985 through the end of 1990 based on actual permits issued by the City of Chico. During the construction period detailed in the Table, housing units increased by 3,353 (12 percent) while the population increased by 8,800 (28 percent). These increases taken together reflect lower projected vacancy rates and larger average household size. A trend toward higher vacancy rates has occurred since 1990 as a large number of multiple-family units have reached completion.

**TABLE 4-15**  
**CITY AND URBAN AREA NEW CONSTRUCTION TRENDS**  
**UNITS CONSTRUCTED BY TYPE AND TOTAL**

Year	City of Chico			Unincorporated Area			Urban Area
	Single Family	Multi Family	Total	Single Family	Multi Family	Total	Total
1985	108	479	587				
1986	196	452	648				
1987	102	188	290				
					unavailable for		
					unincorporated		
					area		
1988	212	305	517				
1989	244	546	790				
1990	246	123	369				
1991	298	849	1147				
FIVE YEAR CONSTRUCTION TOTAL (1985-1990)							
	1,406	2,942	4,348	300	150	450	4,798
UNITS EXISTING PRIOR TO 1985							
	6,706	6,686	13,392	10,153	3,568	13,721	27,113
TOTAL UNITS IN 1990 HOUSING INVENTORY							
	8,112	9,628	17,740	8,381	3,990	14,171	31,911

Source: Planning Division, Building Division, February 1992

Based on projected population growth for the Urban Area and household size, approximately 850 housing units must be added annually to the Chico Urban Area market to meet demand for increased growth, while retaining housing options. Historically, the market has been able to meet this demand only when a variety of conditions are favorable. However, for the period 1985 through 1990 the Housing Element projected that 800 additional units per year should be added within the City limits to meet the demand, and the market fell short of the projected demand with approximately 670 units per year constructed.

## VACANCY RATE

The 1990 Census reported a vacancy rate of just below 5 percent for the City (787 units). Of these units 111 (14 percent) were for sale and 388 (49 percent) were for rent. Remaining units were rented or sold but not occupied or seasonal/recreational use. For the Chico Urban Area there was a 4 percent (1,210 unit) vacancy rate. The vacancy rate for the Chico Urban Area traditionally has been below 5 percent, which the housing industry considers an ideal rate. Table 4-16 presents the annual average multi-family vacancy rate for the period of 1987 to 1990 and the first 7 months of 1991. The relatively high vacancy rate in 1991 reflects the large number of new units built but not absorbed into the housing market. The Planning Office projects a return to historical vacancy rates as new units are integrated into the housing market.

**TABLE 4-16**  
**VACANCY RATE**  
**MULTI-FAMILY VACANCY RATE (1987 TO 1991)**

Year	Annual Average	Monthly	
		High	Low
1987	2.65%	5.88%	.75%
1988	2.11%	6.67%	.40%
1989	1.51%	2.65%	.76%
1990	2.57%	4.71%	1.5%
1991	5.00%	7.00%	4.00%

Source: Housing Office, February 1991

## BELOW MARKET RATE HOUSING

Below market rate housing is housing in which all or part of the costs are subsidized by the public sector so that housing is available to lower income households at more affordable costs. By HUD standards, an affordable unit's monthly cost does not exceed 30 percent of the household's income. Traditionally this figure has been 25 percent, but was raised to more accurately reflect current housing costs. However, financial institutions are using a figure of 30-35 percent of household income for housing costs (principal, interest, taxes and insurance) as a maximum loan threshold.

The rental market contains units that are reserved for lower and very low income households. These units are reserved because the project either received a financial subsidy at the time of construction or it receives an ongoing subsidy for assisting tenants with their rent. The methods of subsidy vary. In some projects, such as the Butte County Housing Authority (BCHA) assisted units, the rent is based on the individual tenant's income. The tenants do not pay more than 30 percent of their income for rent. In the other projects the rent levels are set in accordance with standards established by the State or Federal Government, such as HUD or HCD, and all tenants below a specific income level, such as 50 percent of the median income, pay the same rent. This method assures that units are available to very low and low income households, but the rent levels are not necessarily affordable. Households may pay more than 30 percent of their incomes in these situations, but still are better off than if paying market rate rents.

The current trend by State and Federal Housing Programs is away from the long term commitment of rental subsidies for new units, such as the Section 8 Program provides. Because of this, the maximum affordability benefit is produced by restricting the occupancy of the unit to households earning at or below a particular income level. HCD requires projects to set aside units for households earning less than 35 percent of the median income, in addition to the 50 percent and 80 percent categories.

There continues to be a need for subsidized/assisted units in the Chico housing market. If housing costs continue to rise faster than income, the need for assisted units will increase disproportionately as a segment of the housing market. Table 4-17 summarizes assisted units located within the Chico Urban Area by source of funding assistance.

Table 4-17a lists the units that are **AT RISK** pursuant to the HCD definition in that they receive some form of governmental subsidy. As a condition of the subsidy, the project is required to provide the assistance for a specific period of time. Once the assistance period is met, the project could convert the units to market rate rent levels creating potential displacement problems for the assisted tenants.

Based on the information from Table 4-17a the following projects have assistance contracts for financing or rental assistance that may expire within the next ten years.



**TABLE 4-17 ASSISTED HOUSING PROJECTS**

Project	No. of Units
<b>U. S. Housing Act of 1937 Butte County Housing Authority:</b>	
1. Laurel/Locust Streets, 1519 Locust Street	3
2. Humboldt Avenue (between Linden and Willow Streets)	14
3. Natoma Court	32
4. LaLeita Court	22
5. Hazel/Ivy Street Complex	32
6. E. 20th Street	36
7. Ivy Street	9
<b>Elderly Projects-HUD 231/Section 8 and Section 202:</b>	
8. Bid well Oaks, 700 Salem Street	59
9. Villa Rita, 650 Manzanita Avenue	59
10. East Lindo, 1369 E. Lindo Avenue	20
11. Chico Christian Retirement Center, 120 Parmac Road (Lucian Manor)	32
<b>California Housing Finance Agency (CHFA):</b>	
12. Cinnamon Village, 1650 Forest Avenue	80
13. Cedar Village, 820 W. 4th Avenue	116
14. Turning Point Commons #1, 25 Via La Paz	66
<b>HUD Assisted Multifamily Projects Section 236 and 221:</b>	
15. Trans Pacific Gardens #1, 725 Nord Avenue	104
16. Trans Pacific Gardens #2, 729 Nord Avenue	164
17. Little Chico Gardens, 851 Pomona Avenue	92
18. Rio Lindo Apartments, 455 Rio Lindo Avenue	64
19. Colony West, 1550 Springfield Drive	80
<b>Mortgage Revenue Bonds:</b>	
20. Sycamore Glen, 1199 Diablo Avenue	40
21. Ceres Plaza, 1459 E. Lassen Avenue	36
22. Lakeview Apartments, 2581 California Park Drive	30
23. Pinetree Apartments, 47 Cobblestone Drive	40
24. Sierra Sunrise, Sierra Sunrise Terrace	25
<b>State California, Department of Housing and Community Development/RHCP</b>	
25. East of Eaton, Lassen Avenue @ Eaton Road	76
<b>Farmers Home Administration</b>	
26. La Vista Verde (Farmworker Housing)	33

*(Continued next page)*

1.	Laurel/Locust Streets, 1519 Locust Street	3
2.	Humboldt Avenue (between Linden and Willow Streets)	14
3.	Natoma Court	32
4.	LaLeita Court	22
5.	Hazel/Ivy Street Complex	32
27.	Section 8 Voucher Program/Mod Rehab.	579
1.	Laurel/Locust Streets, 1519 Locust Street	3
2.	Humboldt Avenue (between Linden and Willow Streets)	14
3.	Natoma Court	32
4.	LaLeita Court	22
5.	Hazel/Ivy Street Complex	32
	Total	1943

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Source: City of Chico Housing Office , April, 1992

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Table 17a  
ASSISTED HOUSING PROJECT INVENTORY OF AT RISK UNITS

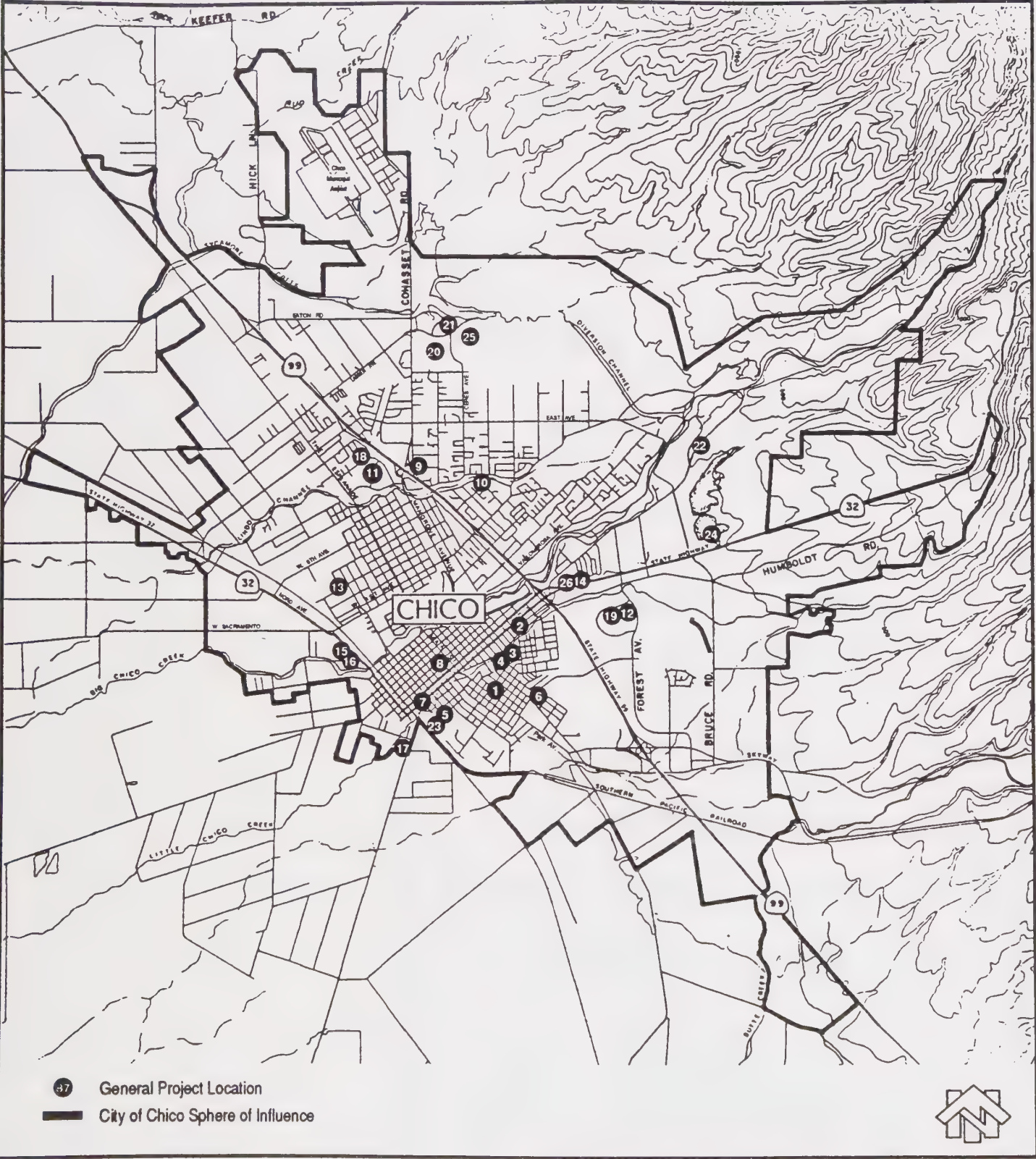
																ASSISTANCE EXP DATE	
Project Name	ADDRESS	OWNER	TENANT TYPE	YEAR BUILT	TOTAL UNITS	STD	BEDROOM MAX				SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE		ASSISTED UNITS		FINANCE	RENTAL	
							1	2	3	4	FINANCING	RENTAL	FINANCE	RENTAL			
HUD ASSISTED PROJECTS																	
Christian Retirement Center	120 Parmac Rd	Nonprofit	Senior	1982	38		38				Sec 202	Sec 8	38	38	2022	2002	
Colony West	1550 Springfield	Private	Family	1980	80		24	56			Sec 221 (D)(4)	Sec 8	80	20	2020	1996	
Bidwell Oaks	700 Salem	Private	Senior	1977	59	14	33	12			Sec 231	Sec 8	59	44	2016	1997	
Trans Pacific Gardens 1	725 Nord	Private	Family	1970	106		42	64			Sec 236 (J)(1)		106		1990		
Trans Pacific Gardens 2	729 Nord	Private	Family	1971	164		68	96			Sec 236 (J)(1)		164		1991		
Rio Lindo Apts	455 Rio Lindo	Private	Family	1975	64		16	42			Sec 236 (J)(1)		64		1995		
Little Chico Gardens	851 Pomona	Private	Family	1977	92		26	66			Sec 236 (J)(1)	Sec 8	92	18	1997	1994	
Villa Rita	650 Manzanita	Private	Senior	1977	59	14	33	12			Sec 231	Sec 8	59	52	2017	1994	
PRIVATE ACTIVITY BOND PROJECT																	
Sycamore Glen	1199 Diablo	Private	Senior	1984	117	27	87				Rev Bonds		24		2014		
Ceres Plaza	1459 E. Lassen	Private	Family	1983	184	36	42	106			Rev Bonds		36		1994		
Lakeview	2581 Calif Park	Private	Family	1986	154		32	104	18		Rev Bonds	Reg Agree	30	15	2017	2017	
Pinetree 1	47 Cobblestone	Private	Family	1984	100		71	15	14		Rev Bonds		20				
Pinetree 2	47 Cobblestone	Private	Family	1984	110		16	92	2		Rev Bonds		20		2010		
Sierra Sunrise		Nonprofit	Senior	1992	110	10	80	20			Certif Part	Reg Agree	25	25	2012	2012	
STATE OF CALIF ASSIST																	
Turning Point Commons	25 Via La Paz	Nonprofit	Family	1984	66		14	23	18	6	CHFA	HCD	66		2014	2014	
East of Eaton	Eaton Road	Nonprofit	Family	1992	76	1	13	36	26		HCD/LIHTC		76		2042		
Cinnamon Village	1650 Forest	Private	Family	1982	80		16	56	8		CHFA	Sec 8	80	80	2010	2010	
Cedar Village	820 W 4th Ave	Private	Family		116		28	56	32		CHFA	Sec 8	116	116	2010	2010	
FARMERS HOME ADMIN ASSIST																	
La Vista Verde	1666 Vista Verde	Nonprofit	Family	1985	33			14	14	5	FMHA	FMHA	33	33	2016	2016	
Total Units					1808	101	667	847	142	37			1188	441			

Footnotes:

\*Indicates that owners have initiated process with HUD to restructure assistance package

# Indicates project is "at risk" but owners have not contacted HUD as of 8/01/92

Map 4.1  
Assisted Housing Projects - Location Map





**HUD Assisted Projects.** The following are HUD-assisted projects:

1. Colony West: The Section 8 contract was renewed for another five year period until 1996. Five years is the maximum extension period. The project is eligible for another 5 year extension under its current HAP contract. The City has no indication that the owners will not renew the rental assistance in 1996.
2. Bidwell Oaks: The Section 8 contract was renewed for another five years until 1997. Under the current HAP contract this is the last renewal. The City is not certain whether HUD will provide another extension after 1997. The project received its financing assistance through the Section 231 program and is not eligible to prepay its mortgage. Therefore the owners would be required to continue the assisted rents without a Section 8 contract. It is this conflict which suggests to the City that HUD will continue the Section 8 assistance beyond 1997.
3. Transpacific Gardens 1: The owners are eligible to apply to HUD for a revised assistance package or sell the project. As of August 1992, HUD has not been contacted by the owners.
4. Transpacific Gardens 2: The owners have contacted HUD and a plan is being negotiated by the parties that will keep the units assisted for another 20 years.
5. Rio Lindo Apartments: As of August 1992 the owners have not contacted HUD. In the event the owners do contact HUD and propose to cancel the assistance the City will be notified and provided an opportunity to preserve the units.
6. Little Chico Gardens: As of August 1992 the owners have not contacted HUD. Similarly to the Rio Lindo Apt. the City will be notified if the project is placed at risk.
7. Villa Rita: As mentioned above in regards to Bidwell Oaks, Section 231 mortgages are not subject to prepayment. The Section 8 contract is scheduled for renewal in 1994 for another 5 year term. The City expects HUD to continue the Section 8 assistance after 1997.
8. Mortgage Revenue Bond Financed Projects:

Ceres Plaza: Ceres Plaza has 184 units and 36 (20 percent) are set a side for low and very low income households (10 percent for each category). The project received permanent financing from the issuance of tax exempt bonds in 1984. The set a side units were a requirement of the Internal Revenue Service

regulations. The units do not have rental assistance and are rented at market rent levels. Therefore, when the regulatory period ends in 1994, the owners could decide to no longer rent to families with incomes below their rent management policy (such as 3 times the rent level). The owners have contacted the City to discuss refinancing. The City will discuss with the owners the feasibility of providing below market rent levels for some of the set a side units.

**Lakeview Apartments:** Lakeview Apartments has been refinanced with tax exempt bonds through the City's allocation. The 30 assisted units are still available to low and very low income households for the remaining term of the loan (2017), and the 15 very low income units, with below market rate rents, are also preserved until 2017. The project has different IRS requirements than Ceres Plaza because it was originally finance after the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

**Cost of Replacing at Risk Units.** As a planning tool the City should recognize the magnitude of the AT RISK problem by examining the worst case scenario whereby all units AT RISK are converted to market rate rent levels and replacement units must be created to provide continued affordable housing.

Based on Table 4-17a the worst case scenario, including mortgage assistance projects and Section 8 assisted projects, would be:

Studios	19 Units
1 Bedroom	215 Units
2 Bedrooms	299 Units
3 Bedrooms	0 Units
4 Bedrooms	0 Units
TOTAL	533 Units

Note: To identify Section 8 units AT RISK by bedroom size, the total units were prorated by the bedroom size distribution for the project.

As mentioned above Transpacific Gardens II is currently negotiating a revised financial assistance package with HUD. If the units are preserved, they will be affordable for another 20 years. A revised replacement unit schedule without this project would be:

Studio Units	19 Units
1 Bedroom	147 Units
2 Bedrooms	203 Units
3 Bedrooms	0 Units
4 Bedrooms	0 Units
TOTAL	369 Units

Note: To identify Section 8 units AT RISK by bedroom size, the total units were prorated by the bedroom size distribution for the project.

The City has estimated a conservative minimum unit cost to replace the AT RISK units as follows:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>SQ FEET</u>	<u>TOTAL DEV. COST</u>
Studio	450 sq/ft	\$45,000
1 Bedroom	600 sq/ft	\$50,000
2 Bedroom	800 sq/ft	\$55,000
3 Bedroom	950 sq/ft	\$60,000
4 Bedroom	1,050 sq/ft	\$70,000

Therefore the cost of replacing the AT RISK units under the two scenarios are:

#### WORST CASE

Studios	(19 @ \$45,000) = \$855,000
1 Bedroom	(215 @ \$50,000) = \$10,750,000
2 Bedroom	(299 @ \$55,000) = \$16,445,000
TOTAL	\$28,050,000

#### REVISED CASE

(19 @ \$45,000) = \$855,000
(147 @ \$50,000) = \$7,350,000
(203 @ \$55,000) = \$11,165,000
\$19,370,000

If we assume that the City would be required to provide 20 percent to 30 percent of the replacement project financing to maintain the same number of affordable units, the financial need to provide replacement units for AT RISK projects would be:

	WORST CASE	REVISED CASE
@20%	\$5,610,000	\$3,874,000
@30%	\$8,415,000	\$5,811,000

The above analysis of the cost to replace AT RISK units indicates that the City's financial requirements could range from \$8,415,000 to \$3,874,000.

The City is utilizing its Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund (LMIHF) of the Chico Redevelopment Agency as the primary local financial resource, and the HOME

Program will be a significant local resource in the future if it is adequately funded by the Federal government. The City is an entitlement jurisdiction for the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) Program funded by HUD. The City has received about \$500,000 a year. The funds are used for ongoing programs, such as, housing rehabilitation and public improvements in lower income neighborhoods, and as such are not available for replacement housing activities.

The LMIHF is projected to have over \$5,000,000 of revenue during the next 5 years. The additional potential of HOME funds indicate that unless the worst case scenario occurs the City should have the ability to preserve AT RISK units.

**Preservation Program.** The previous estimates of Replacement Housing Costs may not be required if HUD can provide financial incentives to the current owner or new owner of an AT RISK project. The goal of the financial incentives is to maintain the affordable units for the tenants and provide a reasonable rate of return to the owner.

HUD provides the incentives through the Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident.

Homeownership Act of 1990 (LIHPRA). The HUD assisted projects that were financed with mortgages through Section 221 (d) (3) and 236 (j) of the relevant housing acts are the projects governed by LIHPRA. Transpacific Gardens II, which is currently working with HUD on a new package of incentives, is governed by LIHPRA but the majority of the provisions are similar and the negotiations are almost complete. Therefore, the following discussion will only cover LIHPRA.

When conversion of a HUD assisted project is proposed by the owners, the City is informed of the owner's intent by owner, and the City should respond as quickly as possible to begin the complicated process of coordinating the preservation of the units. Alternatives include the purchase of the project by a local organization. Currently the Butte County Housing Authority is the only organization which has requested to be notified by HUD directly. HUD's first goal is to work with the existing owners to develop a package of financial incentives that will keep the project affordable and provide a sufficient rate of return for the owners. Chart 4.2 attempts to describe the process which HUD and the owners follow and where the City has a role.

An inquiry by the owners is not necessarily a sign that the project is AT RISK. The inquiry does alert the City to the fact that the project could be place AT RISK if HUD is unable to provide sufficient financial incentives to the owner.



Upon notification by HUD the City will evaluate the property in terms of its physical condition, bedroom mix, and location. The City will work with either the Housing Authority or a local nonprofit to determine whether the project should be preserved and if so does the cost required to acquire and rehabilitate the units make economic sense.

In the event the a project is threatened with conversion and it makes sense to preserve it, the City has the Low and Moderate Income Fund as a resource to participate in the refinancing effort. Without additional assistance from HUD and/or the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and conventional financing the units will be lost.

HUD will attempt to keep units in the assisted inventory. It may require additional assistance from the community to meet the costs necessary to preserve the units. A major limitation on HUD is the total debt on the property compared to its market value. In situations where significant rehabilitation is required the debt limitations may prevent the financing of the repairs. In such situations the City can use its resources and provide a grant for the necessary amount. The affordable Housing Program of the Federal Home Loan Bank is another source. In some cases the Community Development Block Grant or HOME program could be used. A review of the At Risk properties in Chico indicates that at least during the next five years it is not expected that any of the subject properties would require additional preservation assistance for improvements.

Another area of need is when HUD is unable to provide the Rental Assistance funding necessary to meet the very low income and low income tenants.

The City has calculated that on average the present value of a 30 year assistance contract is \$20,000. This is a large subsidy to assist an existing unit. The City has been able to leverage new construction for less money. In the event the City was presented with the need to provide a rental assistance subsidy the cost effectiveness of it would be seriously considered. If there was not an opportunity to replace the unit with new construction the subsidy may make economic sense.

The City will be able to assist in the preservation of AT RISK units in nonmonetary ways as well. In the event a local organization decides to purchase a property through the provisions of LIHPRA, the City can provide technical assistance to the organization on project feasibility analysis and application preparation. The City's support of applications submitted by non profits is often critical when competing for today's scarce financial resources.

Program 29 of this Housing Element, indicates that the City anticipates to preserve 100 units during the five year planning period of this Element. This estimate is based on the average number of units in the four AT RISK projects with mortgage assistance. The purpose of the estimate is to recognize the necessity to allocate resources to this potential need.

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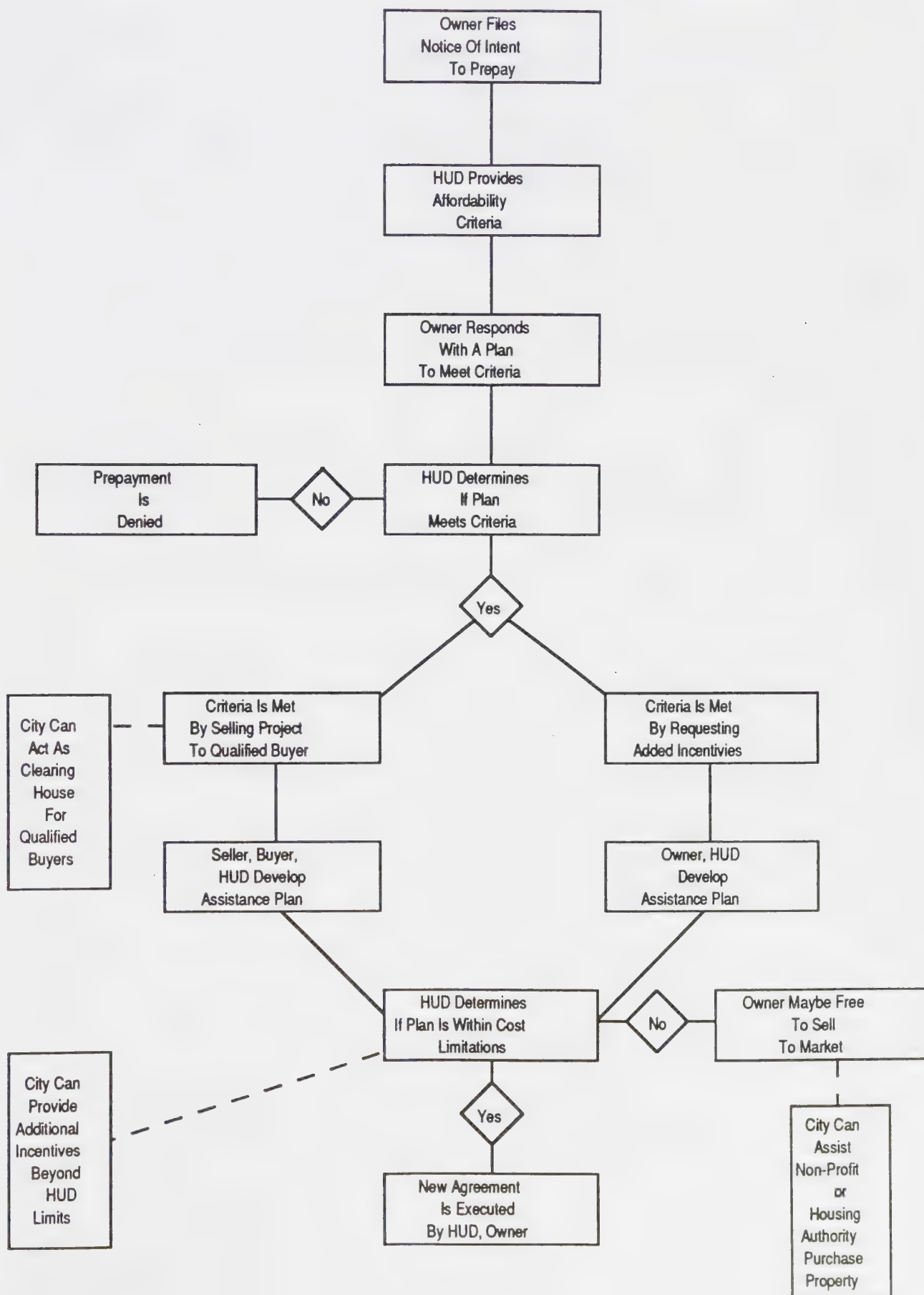
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Chart 4.2  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRESERVATION PROCESS

Housing Element Chapter 4





## REGIONAL HOUSING ALLOCATION PLAN

The Regional Housing Allocation Plan, prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 65584 of the California Government Code, addresses Chico's share of county-wide housing need by income group between 1991 and 1997.

The Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) prepared a Regional Housing Allocation Plan for the period of 1991-1997 (see Appendix A ). The BCAG Plan identified Chico as one of six market areas in the County (five cities and the unincorporated County area). Growth rates for the next five years were assigned on the assumption that each area will maintain its same proportion of the County total to 1997. All market areas were assigned the following allocations by the State Department of Housing and Community Development:

- 28 percent—very low income (does not exceed 50 percent of County median)
- 18 percent—other lower income (income between 50 percent & 80 percent of County median)
- 20 percent—moderate income (income between 80 percent & 120 percent of County median)
- 34 percent—above moderate income (income exceeding 120 percent of County median)

The California Department of Housing and Community Development calculated the median family income for Butte County at \$ 28,314 in 1991.

Based upon projected population growth and the income category breakdowns, the BCAG report provides estimates for the years through 1997.

Due to the distribution and concentration of low and moderate income households within the City limits, the City's goals for the provision of housing exceed those set forth in the allocation plan. The City's specific goals for the provision of housing for low and moderate income households are as follows:

1. To meet the goal of the allocation plan for providing housing for low and moderate income households;
2. To provide additional units above the goal to more accurately meet the local need; and
3. To use mechanisms and programs available to the City, maximizing the number of units available at a cost affordable to very low income households.



**TABLE 4-18a**  
**REGIONAL HOUSING ALLOCATION TABLE BY COMPONENT**

Jurisdiction	Basic HH Allocation	1990 Add'l Vacancy	1997 Add'l Vacancy	Replace Need	Frmwrker Adjustment	Student Adjustment	Other Adjustment
Biggs	65	10	3	10	0	0	0
<b>Chico</b>	<b>2,905</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(210)</b>	<b>806</b>
Gridley	321	0	22	23	1	0	0
Oroville	718	5	81	72	1	60	221
Paradise	1,176	120	75	88	(12)	25	(122)
Unincorp.	4,771	576	300	257	7	125	(905)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,866</b>	<b>977</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: 1991-1997 Regional Housing Allocation Plan, June 1992

**TABLE 4-18b**  
**BASIC NEW CONSTRUCTION NEED BY INCOME GROUP**

Jurisdiction	Very Low		Other Low		Moderate		Above Moderate		Total
Biggs	26	(30%)	16	(18%)	15	(17%)	31	(35%)	88
<b>Chico</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>(17%)</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>(21%)</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>(36%)</b>	<b>4,161</b>
Gridley	58	(25%)	51	(18%)	53	(19%)	105	(38%)	277
Oroville	288	(25%)	197	(17%)	259	(22%)	414	(36%)	1,158
Paradise	414	(31%)	223	(17%)	236	(16%)	477	(35%)	1,350
Unincorp.	1,577	(31%)	932	(18%)	998	(19%)	1,624	(32%)	5,131
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,406</b>	<b>(23%)</b>	<b>2,190</b>	<b>(18%)</b>	<b>2,133</b>	<b>(20%)</b>	<b>4,136</b>	<b>(34%)</b>	<b>12,165</b>

Source: 1991-1997 Regional Housing Allocation Plan, June 1992

It is not reasonable to assume that the City can achieve the goals for providing housing to low and moderate income households through the proposed programs and policies contained in this Housing Element without additional federal and state funding programs. The gap separating subsidies required to make ownership and rental housing affordable to moderate and very low income households, respectively, substantially exceeds City resources available. City programs, such as issuance of revenue bonds, the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund of the Chico Redevelopment Agency, CDBG funds and other non-monetary regulatory requirements and incentives will continue to be efficiently used to meet affordable housing goals.

While the number of housing units currently accessible to the handicapped and the needs for such housing are unknown, it is a goal that one percent of all new units constructed be handicap accessible. Thus, of the 4,000 units expected to be built in the next five years, a minimum of 40 units should be built specifically to be accessible to the handicapped. In light of building code and State requirements, as well as set-aside requirements in housing projects financed through revenue bonds, it is likely that this goal will be achieved.

### 4.3 HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

#### Household Income

The following chart summarizes the 1990 distribution of household income levels.

**TABLE 4-19**  
**MEDIAN INCOME**

	City of Chico	City of Chico	Urban Area	Urban Area	Butte County	Butte County
Year	Median Hshld	Median Family	Median Hshld	Median Family	Median Hshld	Median Family
1979	\$11,146	\$17,466	\$12,914	\$18,197	\$13,012	\$16,301
1980	12,179	18,793	14,076	19,579	14,183	17,539
1981	12,926	19,676	14,976	20,499	15,090	18,363
1982	13,520	20,069	15,664	20,908	15,784	18,730
1983	14,020	20,992	16,243	21,869	16,368	19,591
1984	15,015	22,482	17,396	23,421	17,530	20,981
1985	15,435	23,336	17,883	24,311	18,020	21,778

**TABLE 4-19**  
**MEDIAN INCOME**

	City of Chico	City of Chico	Urban Area	Urban Area	Butte County	Butte County
Year	Median Hshld	Median Family	Median Hshld	Median Family	Median Hshld	Median Family
1986	16,021	24,712	18,562	25,745	18,704	23,062
1987	16,790	25,749	19,452	26,826	19,601	24,030
1988	16,991	27,190	19,685	28,328	19,836	25,376
1989	19,005	28,279	22,449	31,136	22,776	28,314

Source: 1980, 1990 Census, May 1992

Other years based on percent change in Annual State Personal Tax Returns

\*Household median adjusted by rate of change for "all tax returns"

Family median adjusted by rate of change for "joint returns"

## Housing Costs

Table 4-20 reflects current housing costs. 1991 prices for different home sizes in the Chico area are presented along with a median comparison of the previous five years.

**TABLE 4-20**  
**HOUSING COST (1991)**

	Number Sold		Average Price		
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
1-2 bedroom	156		\$89,077		
3 bedroom	447		\$132,572		
4+ bedroom	136		\$190,738		
Total Sold	553	585	609	596	739
Avg Price	\$86,753	\$91,566	\$108,086	\$135,823	\$134,095
Avg sq/ft	1,506	1,543	1,542	1,581	1,587
Avg \$ sq/ft	\$57	\$61	\$69	\$84	\$87

Source: Housing Office, Chico MLS, April 1992

Table 4-21 evaluates the rent/mortgage cost of housing as a percentage of total household income for different income categories. A full 41 percent of all City of Chico households (34 percent CUA) are paying 35 percent or more of their income to meet housing needs. Of owners, only 17 percent of City households (14.6 percent CUA) are committing more than 35 percent of their income to housing while for renters, 52 percent of City households (47.5 percent CUA) are paying more than 35 percent of their income for housing.

Below moderate income households are most impacted by overpaying for housing. Of the total households in the City in this category, 68 percent are paying more than 35 percent of their income for housing (65 percent CUA).

**TABLE 4-21**  
**CITY OF CHICO HOUSING COST AS PERCENT OF INCOME**

**1. Rent As Percent of Household Income:**

% of Household	< \$10,000		\$10,000-19,999		\$20,000-34,999		\$35,000-49,999		\$50,000	
Income Pd in Rent	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*
0-19	43	1.4%	151	4.5%	637	29.9%	531	72.4%	382	85.4%
20-24	94	2.9%	276	8.1%	532	25%	127	17.3%	43	9.7%
25-29	165	5.2%	440	13%	390	18.3%	28	3.9%	4	.9%
30-34	158	4.9%	476	14%	231	10.8%	39	5.3%	---0--	
35+	2,737	85.6%	2,053	60.4%	341	16%	8	1.1%	---0--	
Total Hseholds. in Income Range	3,197		3,396		2,131		733		447	

**2. Mortgage As Percent of Household Income:**

% of Household	< \$10,000	\$10,000-19,999		\$20,000-34,999		\$35,000-49,999		\$50,000		
Income Pd in Mort	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*
0-19	124	40.4%	309	43.5%	487	38.2%	469	46.5%	878	72.4%
20-24	29	9.4%	46	6.5%	148	11.6%	243	24.1%	241	19.9%
25-29	8	2.6%	46	6.5%	178	14%	166	16.5%	63	5.2%
30-34	7	2.3%	15	2.1%	195	15.3%	71	7%	24	2%
35+	139	45.3%	294	41.4%	266	20.9%	60	5.9%	6	.5%
Total Hsehlds. in Income Range	307		710		1,274		1,009		1,212	



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**CHICO URBAN AREA**  
**HOUSING COST AS PERCENT OF INCOME**


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**1. Rent As Percent of Household Income:**

% of Household	< \$10,000		\$10,000-19,999		\$20,000-34,999		\$35,000-49,999		\$50,000	
Income Pd in Rent	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*
0-19	67	1.5%	264	5%	1,165	32%	985	70.4%	659	85.4%
20-24	113	2.5%	464	9%	935	25.6%	259	18.5%	91	11.8%
25-29	219	4.7%	734	14%	718	19.7%	80	5.7%	4	.5%
30-34	200	4.3%	802	15%	352	9.5%	59	4.2%	18	2.3%
35+	3,984	87%	2,942	57%	483	13.2%	17	1.2%	---	0--
Total Hsehlds. in Income Range	4,583		5,206		3,653		1,400		772	

**2. Mortgage As Percent of Household Income:**

% of Household	< \$10,000		\$10,000-19,999		\$20,000-34,999		\$35,000-49,999		\$50,000	
Income Pd in Mort	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*	number	%*
0-19	202	28.7%	706	50.1%	1,339	46%	1,202	48.2%	2,401	69.6%
20-24	49	7%	105	7.5%	250	8.6%	515	20.7%	642	18.6%
25-29	49	7%	100	7.1%	342	11.8%	399	16%	268	7.8%
30-34	33	4.6%	50	3.5%	358	12.3%	237	9.5%	114	3.3%
35+	371	52.7%	447	31.8%	620	21.3%	141	5.6%	23	.7%
Total Hsehlds. in Income Range		705		1,408		2,909		2,494		3,448

\* PERCENT OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS IN THAT INCOME CATEGORY

Source: 1990Census, May 1992

## Homeownership

Chico has relatively high house prices for the Northern Sacramento Valley. The average residential sales price has increased 55 percent in five years. In the Chico Urban Area there is currently little difference in price between new and existing homes (adjusting for type, quality of construction, and current condition of the property). Therefore the needs of homebuyers of existing houses are similar to the needs of new construction buyers. The forecast for the next five years is continued unaffordable homeownership. This will be due to the continued increase in house prices and the continued trend of new employment opportunities in the Chico area being primarily in the lower paying Services and Retail Trade Sectors. However, the current downward trend in interest rates is providing an opportunity for many first time homebuyers to achieve homeownership. If rates remain low, and the inventory of affordable homes is maintained, the forecast for the next five years may be more positive.

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY INDEX

The Housing Affordability Index (Table 4-22) measures the percentage of households that would be able to purchase the median priced home given the current mortgage interest rate. It represents the net effect of the selling price, interest rate and income in determining the affordability of the stock of housing. Given the median home price and the interest rate, the monthly mortgage payment is calculated assuming that the household makes a 20 percent down payment. Using a mortgage loan requirement that 28 percent of gross income is available to be spent on principal and interest, the qualifying, or minimum income necessary to purchase the median priced home can be determined.

The affordability index provides a comparative analysis of the ability of households to purchase. A variety of factors influence the translation of the index to the real market, including variations in the mortgage rate and size of down payment.

Table 4-22A is the affordability index for the entire Chico Urban Area. The Table indicates that purchase of housing is an option available to relatively few at a commitment of 28 percent or less of household income. Table 4-22B is the same index adjusted to minimize the statistical impact of low income student households. Table 4-22B reflects only a slight increase in the number of households which can afford to purchase. Comparing either Table 4-22A or 4-22B to Table 4-22C, and the affordability index for California, shows that the Chico index has constantly declined since 1987 and is approaching the State average. Additionally, Table 4-22D, the national index, shows the state and Chico figures far behind those nationwide.

**Table 4-22**  
**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY INDEX**

Year	Median Home <sup>1</sup> Price	Interest Rate <sup>2</sup>	Monthly Mortgage Payment <sup>3</sup>	Minimum Annual income	Percent of Chico Households That Can Afford To Buy <sup>4</sup>
<b>A. Chico Urban Area</b>					
1985	\$82,666	11.12%	\$636	\$27,252	37.9%
1986	\$82,556	9.82%	\$571	\$24,468	42.6%
1987	\$85,743	8.94%	\$549	\$23,532	44.3%
1988	\$90,310	8.81%	\$571	\$29,616	34.0%
1989	\$106,929	9.76%	\$736	\$31,548	30.7%
1990	\$132,322	9.75%	\$909	\$38,952	25.0%
<b>B. Chico Urban Area (Adjusted For Student Households)</b>					
1985	\$82,666	11.12%	\$636	\$27,252	41.7%
1986	\$82,556	9.82%	\$571	\$24,468	46.9%
1987	\$85,743	8.94%	\$549	\$23,532	48.7%
1988	\$90,310	8.81%	\$571	\$29,616	37.4%
1989	\$106,929	9.76%	\$736	\$31,548	33.8%
1990	\$132,322	9.75%	\$909	\$38,952	27.5%
<b>C. California</b>					
1985	\$119,600	11.12%	\$920	\$39,432	27%
1986	\$133,300	9.82%	\$923	\$39,552	30%
1987	\$141,700	8.94%	\$907	\$38,868	32%
1988	\$167,800	8.81%	\$1,062	\$45,516	24%
1989	\$195,640	9.76%	\$1,346	\$57,684	17%
1990	\$194,010	9.75%	\$1,333	\$57,132	20%
<b>D. United States</b>					
1985	\$75,500	11.12%	\$581	\$24,900	42%
1986	\$80,300	9.82%	\$555	\$23,784	47%
1987	\$85,600	8.94%	\$548	\$23,484	49%
1988	\$89,100	8.81%	\$564	\$24,168	49%
1989	\$93,100	9.76%	\$640	\$27,432	47%
1990	\$95,500	9.75%	\$656	\$28,116	49%

<sup>1</sup> Reflects sales price of single family residences.

<sup>2</sup> Interest rates are on annual average.

<sup>3</sup> Conventional 30-year, fixed rate mortgage, with 20 percent down payment.

<sup>4</sup> Household incomes were adjusted for annual change equal to the increase in the Consumers Price index.

Note: Median annual home prices from National Association of Realtors and California Association of Realtors.

Data for 1990 are for the month of June. Interest rate is the annual Federal Home Loan Bank Board effective rate on all loans closed.

Source: Planning Division/Housing office, February 1992

## HOUSING COST VARIABLES

Table 4-23 identifies the relationship between the price of a house and the relative percentage of households able to purchase at a number of sample prices. Table 4-24 compares the effect of interest rates on the ability of Chico Urban Area households to purchase. For the purpose of the Table, a constant mortgage amount of \$100,000 was used. Each 1 percent increase in interest rates results in an increase of \$3,000 annual income necessary to afford to purchase. From a different perspective, each 1 percent increase in interest rates decreased by approximately 7 percent the number of Chico Urban Area households which could afford to purchase a home.

**TABLE 4-23**  
**HOUSING COST AFFORDABILITY RELATIONSHIP**

<b>Selling Price</b>	<b>Required Income</b>	<b>Percent of CUA Households That Can Afford to Buy (1990)</b>
\$80,000	\$22,000	47%
\$100,000	27,587	37%
\$120,000	33,104	29%
\$140,000	38,622	22%

Assuming 30-year conventional loan at 9. percent interest with 20 percent down.

Note: 28 percent of income & loan payment

Source: Housing Office , February 1992



**TABLE 4-24**  
**INTEREST RATE-AFFORDABILITY RELATIONSHIP**

Interest Rate	Required Income	Percent of CUA Households That Can Afford To Buy (1990)	Adjusted For Student Households
7.5%	\$29,966	33%	42%
8.0%	\$31,477	31%	37%
8.5%	\$32,953	29%	34%
9.0%	\$34,483	27%	30%
9.5%	\$36,036	25%	27%
10.0%	\$37,610	23%	23%

Assuming \$100,000 mortgage for 30-years

Note: 28% of income for principle & interest

Source: Housing Office , February 1992

## Rental Housing

A survey of the Chico Urban Area rental market was conducted in the fall of 1991. The rental rates in the area vary, but median rates for different sized units compared to affordable rents range as follows:

SIZE	MARKET	LOW	VERY LOW
1 Bedroom	\$375	\$467	\$278
2 Bedrooms	475	525	313
3 Bedrooms	625	578	342
4 Bedrooms	825	673	400

(There are approximately 12,454 rental units in the Chico Urban Area.)

The median rent in 1990 was \$451 per month. The Chico Urban Area rental market was found to be primarily serving the needs of households earning more than 80% of the local median income. The market is meeting the needs of households earning between 60% and 80 percent of the local median income through the combination of the older rental stock and assisted units (see Table 4-17). The unmet need is found in the very low income group, which is defined as households earning at or below 50 percent of the local median income. The market assessment identified a need for 2,839 units that have rent levels affordable to this group. The very low income group consists of seniors, students, families and unrelated renter households.

### **Manufactured Housing Ownership**

An alternative to the common site-built home is found in the purchase of a manufactured, or mobile home. Technically, the designation of manufactured housing is applied to factory built housing units constructed to the standards established by the National Mobile Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974. In 1981, the State adopted legislation requiring that cities and counties permit the installation of manufactured housing.

In response to this legislative mandate, the City of Chico amended its ordinances to provide an overlay zoning designation which allows the placement of manufactured housing on single lots, and applied this zoning to several large parcels.

The City also amended the land use regulations to reduce the minimum lot sizes and setbacks in medium and high density residential zones. Minimum lot sizes were reduced by 25 percent, to 4,500 square feet, and setbacks were reduced to 15 feet, front and rear. Development of a manufactured home subdivision within one of the areas zoned for the use and utilizing the reduced development standards, could result in a density of 8-10 units per acre as compared to 4-4.5 units per acre under the old standards.

Of the 2,081 mobile homes in the Chico Urban Area, representing 7 percent of total housing units, all but 303 are located outside the City limits. Throughout the County, mobile homes account for 15 percent of all housing units. The cost for a manufactured housing unit is usually lower than for a comparably sized standard housing unit. Manufactured housing costs are usually about \$30 per square foot, compared to a minimum of \$50 per square foot for site built housing (not including land). Prices range from a low of \$24,000 for a two bedroom, 950 square foot unit, to \$82,000 for a 2,000 square foot luxury model. Since delivery of a manufactured home is possible in a short time, additional savings can be realized as interest costs are not incurred during construction.

Additional costs are incurred in setting up the mobile home on the site, and monthly costs are also incurred for space rental (\$200 per month average) when placed in a mobile home park or land purchase when placed on an individual lot.

Purchase of a manufactured housing unit typically requires a down payment of 15 percent with a finance period of twenty years. Interest rates on mobile homes are usually 1 percent to 2 percent higher than loan rates on conventional homes.

At the current interest rate of 9.25 percent, monthly payments would equal 1.30 percent of the purchase price. For a manufactured home of approximately 1,000 square feet costing \$40,000, the following monthly costs would be expected:

▶ Mortgage payment	\$311
▶ Space Rental	200
▶ Annual Fees	<u>30/mo.</u>
Total	\$586

If the manufactured home were placed on its own lot, these costs would be even higher if lot payments were required. Minimum lot purchase price would be approximately \$40,000 with monthly payments, for both the lot and the unit (including taxes) of about \$725. Even though manufactured housing is often more affordable than standard housing, there are several financial and practical drawbacks which can deter prospective buyers. Examples are:

- ▶ Higher interest rates.
- ▶ Lower rate of appreciation on value of unit (and possibly even depreciation) than for standard houses.
- ▶ Most mobile home parks are “adult oriented”, making them unattractive environments for young families.
- ▶ Costs for extras such as decks, canopies, stairs, siding, garages, carports, etc.
- ▶ There are no appreciable differences in land costs for placement of a manufactured home versus construction of a standard construction home.

## 4.4 HOUSING CONDITION

### Housing Stock Condition

The condition of the housing stock in Chico’s residential neighborhoods was surveyed in 1991. Of the 5,155 single-family units surveyed, 8.8 percent (454) needed minor repair, 8.3 percent (432) needed moderate to substantial rehabilitation and .2 percent (10) units

were considered to be so deteriorated as to be best suited for demolition. The largest concentration of substandard housing is located in the Chapmantown area, generally east of Mulberry Street and south of East Ninth Street. However, examples of deteriorated housing can be located in almost any older neighborhood in the Urban Area.

The housing condition survey was initiated as a program of the 1986 Housing Element. The survey results indicate that housing in need of repair has declined both in real numbers and as a percentage of total units. Presumably this is the result of the City's on-going code enforcement program and increasing real estate values, making investment in older housing a means of home ownership.

### Housing Age

As Table 4-25 demonstrates, more than 51 percent of the Urban Area housing stock was built since 1970. In the City of Chico, the percent of units built since 1970 is 65 percent. The age of the housing stock is a good indicator of the potential need for replacement housing and the adequacy of the housing stock in terms of health and safety standards. It should be noted that the age of the stock is established by the occupant of the unit during the census and as such may not be accurate.

**TABLE 4-25**  
**HOUSING STOCK**

Chico Urban Area			
AGE OF THE HOUSING STOCK (1990)			
	City of Chico	Unincorporated Area	Urban Area Total
1980 to 1990	5,349	3,984	9,333
1970 to 1979	3,712	3,445	7,157
1960 to 1969	1,880	2,949	4,829
1950 to 1959	1,974	3,307	5,281
1940 to 1949	1,486	1,272	2,758
1939 or earlier	2,030	1,112	3,142

Source: 1990 Census, Housing Office, February 1991



Map 4.2

## Chico Housing Inventory And Condition Survey - SURVEY AREA BOUNDARY



## **4.5 PROVISION OF HOUSING FOR LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS**

### **Article XXXIV—Referendum Authority**

Article XXXIV of the California Constitution requires that local voters approve the development, construction or acquisition of low income housing by a State or public body when more than 49 percent of the units are for low income households. To provide authorization for low income projects, the voters of the City of Chico approved 500 units in March 1977 and an additional 250 units in November 1979. Of the total 750 units approved, 250 units were specifically allocated to the Butte County Housing Authority (BCHA). Fifty of the units allocated to the BCHA have been developed and a 60 unit project is pending. Of the City's remaining 500 units, 371 have been constructed with another 72 units allocated, leaving 57 units available for development under the referendum authorization. The City is placed a measure on the June 1992 ballot for 500 units which was defeated.

### **Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy(CHAS)**

As part of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, the City has been required to develop a Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS). The CHAS consists of a survey of housing conditions; an assessment of housing needs of the low and moderate income population; goals for housing units and households to be assisted; and locations of proposed assisted housing. HUD uses the CHAS as a basis for approval or disapproval of assisted housing as well as for monitoring the City's provision of assisted housing.

### **Low and Moderate Income Housing Developments**

In addition to private developers, the BCHA and the City of Chico have been involved in development of low and moderate income housing in the City. The City has assisted in this development by providing funding assistance and by giving priority for disposition of land acquired with CDBG funds.

### **BUTTE COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY (BCHA)**

The City has worked closely with BCHA over the years to develop low income housing. The City assisted BCHA with development of the original 100 duplex units within the City, approximately 60 percent of which are currently occupied by very low income families. These units were built at scattered sites throughout the City to encourage a mixture of housing types within City neighborhoods. The units are well maintained and operated by



BCHA. BCHA recently completed 50 units of additional housing. BCHA is currently working to develop a 60 unit senior housing project, Vallombrosa Commons. In addition BCHA manages approximately 500 existing section 8 units in the Chico Urban Area.

## CITY OF CHICO

In the past, the City has not been a direct provider of low and moderate income housing, but has provided funding and/or resources to providers of such housing. However, this role will change as the City becomes the primary source of financial assistance. Previous and current programs include:

- ▶ **Chico Redevelopment Agency's Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund (LMIHF)**

The City has established three redevelopment project areas (RDA's) and is in the process of merging these RDA's in order to better allocate funds. A RDA covering the greater Chico Urban Area is also being considered. This RDA would assist in the funding of improvements, including sanitary sewers to the unincorporated area within Chico's Sphere of Influence. Twenty percent of the tax increment which provides financing for redevelopment project areas must be utilized to benefit low and moderate income housing. The City has utilized this funding source to underwrite the extension and development of infrastructure needed to support low income housing projects and to buy down rents or subsidize the cost of providing affordable housing units to very low and low income and senior housing.

- ▶ **Community Development Block Grant**

The City has participated in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program since its inception in 1975.

In 1982, the City became an Entitlement City under the CDBG Program. Under the Entitlement Program, the City receives funding based on HUD's allocation formula. The Entitlement Program provides the City greater flexibility in designing its CDBG Program, since it is no longer required to develop programs to meet competitive criteria, nor is it restricted to target areas. These funds have been allocated for:

- City-wide housing rehabilitation
- 45 blocks of residential neighborhood public infrastructure improved/installed

- Historic train depot rehabilitation
- Women's shelter developed
- Scrap yard relocated from residential neighborhood
- Open drainage ditch enclosed
- Community organizations funded to provide essential social services to lower-income households

► **Revenue Bond Financing**

The City has used its ability to issue tax free revenue bonds to assist in the development of various housing projects within the community. In these cases, while the City Council authorizes the issuance of tax free bonds, the City assumes no liability or risk associated with the repayment of these bonds. Rather, the City is allowing a developer to use the City's tax exempt status to achieve lower financing rates in order to develop additional housing units within the community. Under previous tax law, In exchange for the right to use this tax exempt status, the developers were required to reserve 20 percent of the units for low and very low income. This requirement was further refined by the City to specify that 10 percent be reserved for very low income families (50 percent of the median income). In addition, 5 percent of the units are required to be built to meet the needs of the handicapped according to Title 25 requirements. In 1986 the requirements were increased by the Federal government to 20 percent for very low or 40 percent for low income families. Through 1990, six projects have actually been constructed using this financing, for a total of 674 units. These projects have set aside 171 low and moderate income units.

The recent revisions to the tax code and lower interest rates have reduced the need for revenue bond financing for traditional housing. Revenue Bonds still have a major role in financing nontraditional projects that institutional lenders will not underwrite. For example, the City recently used its tax exempt authority to assist a senior housing project that provides a combination of congregate living and skilled nursing services.



## 4.6 HOUSING ISSUES

Based on trends since 1970, multi-family dwelling units will apparently play a larger role in housing Chico's population during the next 10 years. This conclusion seems especially clear for the immediate future, as the ability to purchase single family housing soars out of reach of a larger proportion of Chico's families. Ways must be found to provide better utility of the land, including smaller minimum lot sizes and placement of additional units on already developed lots. In developing new housing, however, community values must be preserved.

### Multiple Family Residential Development

From 1970 to 1980 the City of Chico experienced a 158 percent increase in the multiple family housing stock. From 1980 to 1990 the increase was 74 percent. The Urban Area increase from 1980 to 1990 was 50 percent. The increase in multifamily units in the City has reduced the percentage of single-family units from 70 percent in 1970 to 47 percent in 1990, despite a significant increase in the total number of such units. Table 4-26 below summarizes the dramatic increase in multi-family housing units in the past two decades.

**TABLE 4-26**  
**MULTIPLE FAMILY HOUSING PRODUCTION**

Chico Urban Area		
Multiple Family Housing Production		
1970 to 1990		
	<u>City of Chico</u>	<u>Chico Urban Area</u>
1970	1,930	--
1980	4,981	9,592
1990	8,667	14,371

Source: Planning Division

## COMPATIBILITY ISSUES

The city must continue to be concerned with the preservation of the residential character of Chico neighborhoods and the preservation of historically significant structures. New housing in older neighborhoods should be designed so as to be compatible both in design and density with existing residences.

The areas indicated as High Density Residential on the General Plan Land Use Map do not necessarily represent identical multi-family development opportunities. In the South Campus neighborhood, for example, the high density designation is intended to reflect the need for some new higher density dwellings, but it is desired to retain a wide mixture of housing units in this area, including older single family units.

While the densities permitted by the General Plan may be as high as 25 units per acre, most multiple family residential projects are built at densities of 16 - 20 units per acre. There are many reasons why the projects are built at less than the maximum density, including increased construction costs for multi-story development (in excess of two stories) and development standards (setbacks, parking requirements and open space).

For the purpose of calculating holding capacity, 20 units per acre is used. For determining service capacities, the limit authorized by the plan is used to ensure that should development be proposed near the limit, service capacity will not restrict such development. In other words, service capacities for high density residential areas are planned and available for development at the General Plan limit, even though development has historically occurred at lower levels.

The importance of multi-family dwelling units in Chico's future housing stock makes it imperative that the City deal effectively with the specific issues of multi-family densities and amenities in order to improve the potential of this housing type for long-term occupancy by families. The multi-family dwelling issues call for a consideration of certain conflicts between the character of the new multi-family housing and older residential types. The conflicts of scale and density are central to the appearance of apartments in single family neighborhoods such as South Campus, Citrus and Rosedale. Apartment densities, the bulk of the buildings, and the extent of facades on the new apartments are frequently out of scale with the surrounding homes. In the South Campus neighborhood where the example is most extreme, single family homes have been developed at 7 to 10 dwelling units per net acre. Conversion of the single family homes to smaller rental units has raised the overall density to about 15 dwelling units per net acre. New apartments, however, have been developed at densities ranging upward to 30 dwelling units per net acre.

Reaction to these changes has led to establishment of a historical landmark district in the South Campus area and the rezoning of the Citrus Avenue area to single family residential development. In 1987, density was reduced City-wide for medium and high density residential zones, from 20 and 35 units per acre respectively, to 14 and 25 units per acre. As indicated above, however, these lower densities more accurately reflect what has typically been built in Chico.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

In the past, development at higher densities often meant that landscaped front and side yards were sacrificed, leaving no space for porches, decks, or other usable open spaces. Too often, the required off-street parking located between the buildings and the absence of substantial landscaping resulted in an appearance unnecessarily bleak in a city where home settings traditionally boast shade trees and grassy yards.

A number of code amendments have been adopted to correct many of the above problems. Recent amendments to the Land Use Regulations require 40 percent open space for development in the Medium Density Residential District and 35 percent open space in the High Density Residential District. There are also specific landscape requirements for parking areas that must be met.

In addition to those design requirements implemented in the Land Use Regulations, the Chico Municipal Code requires that plans for all construction, except single family residences, be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board (ARB). The ARB works with a project applicant towards making a development compatible with the neighborhood, through application of design standards. All of the above steps contribute towards the enhancement of the general appearance of a project.

In order to avoid apartment unit construction characterized by unimaginative design and by extensive parking areas fronting local streets and adjacent residences, certain areas of design need to be stressed, especially in the evaluation of new apartments. Architectural review guidelines were adopted in 1987 to assist the ARB and project applicants and designers in considering design opportunities. The guidelines establish minimum standards for site, building and landscape design. Application of the guidelines has been further illustrated through preparation of a design manual, which is anticipated to be available to developers and designers by Fall 1992.

The City of Chico is now in the process of updating its General Plan, which will include a community character assessment. Once completed, the above mentioned guidelines and manual will be revised to be consistent with adopted goals and policies.

## **Single Family Owner Occupied First-Time Homebuyers**

Chico as a growing area retail/services center is generating demand for housing as an increasing labor force of relatively young wage earners attempt to enter the home ownership market for the first time. Income that reflects pay scales in the Retail Services sector typically cannot support the level of payments required to afford the median price home in the Chico Urban Area (\$134,095). For most first-time homebuyers alternatives include purchasing a house in need of extensive repairs, purchasing a condominium, or purchasing a home outside of the Chico Urban Area.

The City of Chico is addressing some of the need in this area with its first-time homebuyer program—the Mortgage Subsidy Program (MSP). The MSP is designed to help first-time homebuyers purchase a home in the City of Chico by providing a deferred payment second mortgage of up to 20 percent of the sales price. The City uses the LMIHF to fund the program. This program provides an opportunity for low income persons and families to buy their first home.

## **Elderly Housing**

There are 368 units which have been developed specifically for occupancy by the elderly. Of these units, 212 are contained in two congregate housing projects, while the remaining 156 self contained units are in three developments. In each case, the City provided incentives to the developer, such as reduction in the amount of required off-street parking and/or increased density.

In approving such projects and incentives, the City must exercise caution to ensure that in the event a project fails as exclusively elderly housing, conversion to another use will not result in adverse effects, such as inadequate parking or incompatible use.

## **Temporary Housing**

The 1990 Census indicates there are approximately 127 homeless in the Chico Urban Area. This includes persons on the street and in the shelters as of a specific date. Information on statistics for the Chico Homeless for five years (through 12/90) is provided on Table 4-27.



**TABLE 4-27**  
**ASSISTANCE TO THE HOMELESS**

Five Year Statistics For Chico Homeless As Provided by Chico FEMA Agencies			
I.	<b>Total Individuals Served</b>	<b>3,445</b>	(Unduplicated) <sup>1</sup>
	A) Single Adults		
	1. Men	925	
	2. Women	340	
	B) Families		
	1. Adults	1,235	
	2. Children	945	
II.	<b>Total Nights Provided</b>	<b>14,755</b>	(Duplicated) <sup>2</sup>
	A) Single Adults		
	1. Men	2,340	
	2. Women	1,065	
	B) Families		
	1. Adults	2,325	
	2. Children	1,325	Total Persons
III.	<b>Residence In Chico</b>		
	A) Average Number of Years Residence in Chico		
	5.58/years		
	B) Range of 274.58/years		
IV.	<b>Reason Shelter Needed</b>		
	A) Eviction	420	
	B) Relocating or Between		
	Rentals	180	
V.	<b>Other Social Services Provided by Providers</b>		
		<u>Cases</u>	<u>Individuals</u>
	A) Food Voucher	9,414	14,000
	B) Food Locker	4,125	973

<sup>1</sup> This number represents the number of individuals that request assistance and attempts to avoid double counting of persons served by two different agencies.

<sup>2</sup> This number represents the number of persons who were assisted overall and could contain double counting.

Source: United Way, Chico Office (through December 1990)

Transients and persons stranded in the area for various reasons who are in need of shelter are served through a motel voucher system. Local service providers issue vouchers for temporary lodging at Urban Area motels. In the winter months, temporary overnight lodging is also provided at the Chico Armory. Persons who are residents of the community but have been displaced from their housing by fire, eviction or other action are served in several ways. In addition to the above mentioned programs, in the fall of 1991, The Esplanade House was opened as a transitional shelter for homeless families. Catalyst, a women's shelter, also provides temporary housing for homeless women and children due to abusive situations.

The need in the Chico area is for a permanent temporary housing facility. This facility could provide lodging and help link clients up with appropriate social services and job training assistance.

### **Condominium Conversions**

In 1981, the City adopted a condominium conversion ordinance with regulator mechanisms addressing conversions. Specific features of the ordinance provided for tenant notification; relocation assistance for the elderly, handicapped and low income persons; structural reports; and building standards and equipment. The ordinance also requires that for every condominium conversion, there must be an equal number of new apartments provided on the market. From a review of tax rolls, it appears that less than 30 percent of all units converted are owner occupied. The majority of the units are held by the original subdivider, or in "blocks" of units by an investor or investors, or by absentee owners. Apparently most condominium projects are currently operated primarily as apartments, although the option is present to sell units individually. The same trends are apparent in projects specifically built as condominium projects. The effort required to sell individual units and success in doing so varies from project to project, but is moderate in most instances. Condominium conversion is not a priority issue at this time.

### **Accessory Apartments**

Additional housing units can be developed at a minimal cost by either permitting the development of additional units on improved lots or dividing existing units into flats. The City has adopted standards for an RD-1 Low Density Residential District which has been applied in areas traditionally reserved for single family residential use. This district allows the division of existing residences into multiple units (subject to use permit approval) and construction of accessory apartments, commonly referred to as "mother-in-law" units, on improved lots. City standards restrict the accessory apartments to 640 square foot, single bedroom (or studio) units, but does not restrict occupancy. The extent to which the RD-1 Zone

is to be applied throughout the City is an issue yet to be fully resolved, along with adoption of development standards for accessory apartments.

In addition to resolving the issue of RD-1 application, the City should consider amending its code to reflect changes to State statutes regarding the maximum size of second units and analyze the feasibility of allowing second units, within all residential zones. If feasible, standards should be considered which limit the number of units per area, based on infrastructure capacity; require owner-occupancy of main or second unit and not require additional on-site parking, but permit on-street parking for the second unit. Also review should be given to integrating future second units into new subdivision design.

### **Off-Site Constructed Homes (Mobile Homes)**

The importance of off-site constructed homes, especially for moderate income families in Chico's future, has been recognized by the City although such development occurs almost exclusively in the surrounding unincorporated community. The issues associated with off-site constructed homes include the locations where they will be allowed and the densities that will govern their development. Off-site constructed home parks in the Chico Urban Area have been developed at various densities ranging from 7 to 27 off-site constructed home units per net acre. The roomier parks are able to provide common open space and recreation facilities essential to enjoyable family living. The more crowded ones offer little more than the rental space, albeit affordable housing. It is worth noting that the extension of sanitary sewers, as mandated by the State, may have a significant impact on the affordability of older mobile home parks currently using septic systems.

The off-site manufactured home overlay zone has been applied to several large parcels to offer opportunities for this housing alternative. It should be noted however, that many of the parcels designated for off-site constructed housing have been developed during the past six years with such housing or with conventional multiple-family housing. The remaining land zoned for off-site manufactured housing is currently not available due to lack of infrastructure or environmental constraints. Currently City regulations do not allow installation of manufactured housing on permanent foundations on all residential lots, but limits such housing to those areas designated by the overlay zone and to R-3 High Density Residential and commercial zones with a use permit.

### **Minimum Lot Size**

One means of reducing land cost for residential development is to reduce the minimum lot size requirements, thus spreading the land cost over a larger number of units. The City has reduced minimum lot sizes in the High and Medium Density Residential Zoning

Districts. The City has approved zero lot line developments of single family detached homes on smaller lots in the R-2 Medium Density Residential zone. These subdivisions have been approved in areas designated for Low Density Residential development (maximum 6 dwelling units per acre) in the General Plan. Conditional zoning agreements have been executed restricting these subdivisions to the six unit per acre maximum and single-family detached residences.

These reduced minimum size lots should be examined to determine if amenities and appearance are compatible with community standards. The question of what the minimum acceptable lot size is must be addressed. Also the possibility of reducing minimum lot sizes in other residential districts should be considered. Consideration should be given to establishing performance-based zoning in residential zones to permit smaller sized lots while enhancing and supporting creative subdivision design.

### **Energy Conservation**

Recognizing the importance of heating and cooling costs to the overall cost of housing and the importance of conserving energy wherever possible, the City has adopted a retro-fit ordinance requiring the installation of energy conservation measures in existing residential structures under specific conditions. New structures in the City must also meet the revised State of California Administrative Code: Title 24 Building Standards, requiring construction of energy efficient buildings.

The use of passive solar techniques such as site orientation, the use of landscaping, and the use of active solar technology are also being examined. The provision of passive solar systems and other measures at the subdivision and house design phase adds little or no costs to development while adding significantly to the long-term affordability to the homeowner. The City will continue to pursue its study of energy conservation techniques to determine those appropriate for the Chico area and then modify its building, zoning and subdivision regulations to implement those techniques. The City should consider development of an incentives program integrating benefits, such as increased density and reduced development standards and costs, in exchange for project designs exhibiting a high degree of affordability and site sensitivity, including passive and active solar energy systems.

### **Jobs/Housing Balance**

A jobs/housing balance is becoming increasingly important as the City recognizes the desirability for housing type and availability to match housing need, using employment as the determiner of need. When total employment (number of jobs that exist in Chico) is equal to resident employment (number of jobs Chico residents hold), the



jobs/housing balance will be 1.0 (efficient balance). The benefits to the City that results from a jobs/housing balance of 1.0 include adequate housing supply, energy conservation, less air pollution and shorter commutes. The formula for arriving at the jobs/housing balance ratio is:

$$\frac{\text{total jobs}}{\text{employed residents}} = \text{Jobs/Housing Balance}$$

for the Chico Area:

$$\frac{35,602}{34,961} = 1.02$$

Another way to arrive at the jobs/housing balance is to calculate the ideal number of dwelling units desired. That calculation is in the following formula:

$$\begin{array}{lcl} \# \text{ of dwelling units} & = & \frac{\text{total jobs}}{\text{workers per household}} \times (1 + \text{desired} \\ \text{(ideal)} & & \text{vacancy rate)} \end{array}$$

For the Chico Area:

$$\begin{array}{lcl} \# \text{ of dwelling units} & = & \frac{35,602}{1.23} \times (1 + 5\%) \\ \text{(ideal)} & & \\ \text{" " " } & = & 30,392 \end{array}$$

Actual number of dwelling units in the Chico Urban Area is 30,063 (31,549 for the Greater Chico Area).

The above figures indicate that the jobs/housing balance for the Chico Urban Area is near 1.0. The goal of the City will be to maintain a jobs/housing balance of 1.0. A greater challenge will be to provide housing affordable to all economic segments of the community.

## 4.7 LAND AVAILABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

### Available Land for Residential Development

Within the Chico Urban Area, there are substantial vacant lands designated in the General Plan for various densities of residential development. A summary of vacant land designated for residential use and development in the Chico Urban Area is shown in Table 4-28:

**TABLE 4-28**  
**HOLDING CAPACITY ANALYSIS**

City of Chico						
General Plan Holding Capacity Analysis						
<u>Land Use</u> <u>Designation</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Units</u> <u>Acre</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Units</u>	<u>Persons/Unit</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Less 5%</u> <u>Vacancy</u>
Rural	1,380	2	2,760	4	11,040	10,488
Low Density	3,179	4	12,716	3	38,148	36,241
Medium Density	643	10	6,430	2.5	16,075	15,270
High Density	622	20	12,440	2	24,880	23,640

Source: Planning Division, July 1992. Population Holding Capacity: 85,639.

Generally, the land indicated in the General Plan Holding Capacity Analysis is also zoned for residential use. These lands are contained within the primary Sphere of Influence for which public facilities, including sewer facilities, have been planned.

It is clear that the lands within the Sphere of Influence are not equal as to suitability for immediate or near future development. Obviously, those lands which are largely surrounded by or adjacent to existing urban development are most readily developable due to minimal costs for the extension of services and infrastructure.

The next degree of suitability (moderately available) is identified as those lands which are in close proximity to some infrastructure, but still require costly extensions to establish full services for development. Sewer trunk lines, which were extensively installed in conjunction with the establishment of two sewer assessment districts, result in large amounts of land being in this category.

The final category of land suitability (urban reserve) for development is those lands which would require extensive services and infrastructure extension to facilitate development. These lands could generally be considered designated for urban reserve or holding status.

Table 4-29 summarizes the readiness of lands for development based on type of residential land use; all categories are estimates only. Acreage defined as "readily developable" is, by definition (refer to page 71), located within the City of Chico incorporated boundaries. Based on the units per acre figures shown in Table 4-28 readily developable land will support construction of 6, 790 housing units or about 166 percent of the City's regional housing allocation. Categories summarizing lands held as permanent open space or for public use and lands subject to environmental constraints are also shown.

**TABLE 4-29**  
**SUITABILITY OF LANDS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Land Use Designation	Total Acreage	Readily Developable	Moderately Developable	Urban Reserve	Environmental Constraint	Held as Permanent Open Space/Public Use
Rural	1,380	690	690	0	--	0
Low Density	3,179	500	1,050	879	700	50
Medium Density	643	95	153	0	385	10
High Density	622	123	55	0	379	65

Source: Planning Division, July 1992.

The table indicates that there are ample lands available for immediate and near term development, meeting the anticipated demand for housing. Additionally, as land is developed, infrastructure and services are extended, increasing the developability of those lands in the other categories.

Due to the large quantities of vacant lands available and suitable for development of residential projects at all densities, it is not economically viable on a large scale to redevelop existing improved sites. However, on a limited basis, single family residences, usually older, located on large lots zoned for multiple units are being removed and replaced with apartment buildings.

Water service is provided by California Water Service Company from deep wells. Due to the abundance of ground water and the ability of the provider to maintain and provide service once necessary mains and extensions are installed by the subdivider, provision of water service is not considered to present a constraint to development.

Sanitary sewers are used by almost all development within the City, while development in the unincorporated area relies on septic tanks. The City sewer system, including trunkline and treatment capacities, is sufficient to meet demand through 1997. Recently verified high levels of nitrates in ground water has restricted the density of development allowed utilizing septic systems to one unit per acre. The number of projects required to annex to the City to utilize the sanitary sewer system has increased as a result. This nitrate condition has led to the projections that much of the new development in the Urban Area will occur within the City. Despite this factor however, growth in the unincorporated area surrounding the City is second only to Chico within Butte County, in number of units constructed from 1980 to 1990.

Environmental constraints, effecting land availability and suitability for development will be discussed in greater depth in Section H--Constraints. Storm water runoff which had been considered adequate is being assessed for implementation of alternative systems that detain more run-off on-site, improve surface water quality and reduce downstream flooding. In addition, Comanche and Little Chico Creeks, which had been thought to have sufficient capacity, are now at or exceeding capacity. Additional development in the southeast quadrant of the City will be required to engineer alternative systems, such as detention ponds to mitigate impacts of runoff on-site.

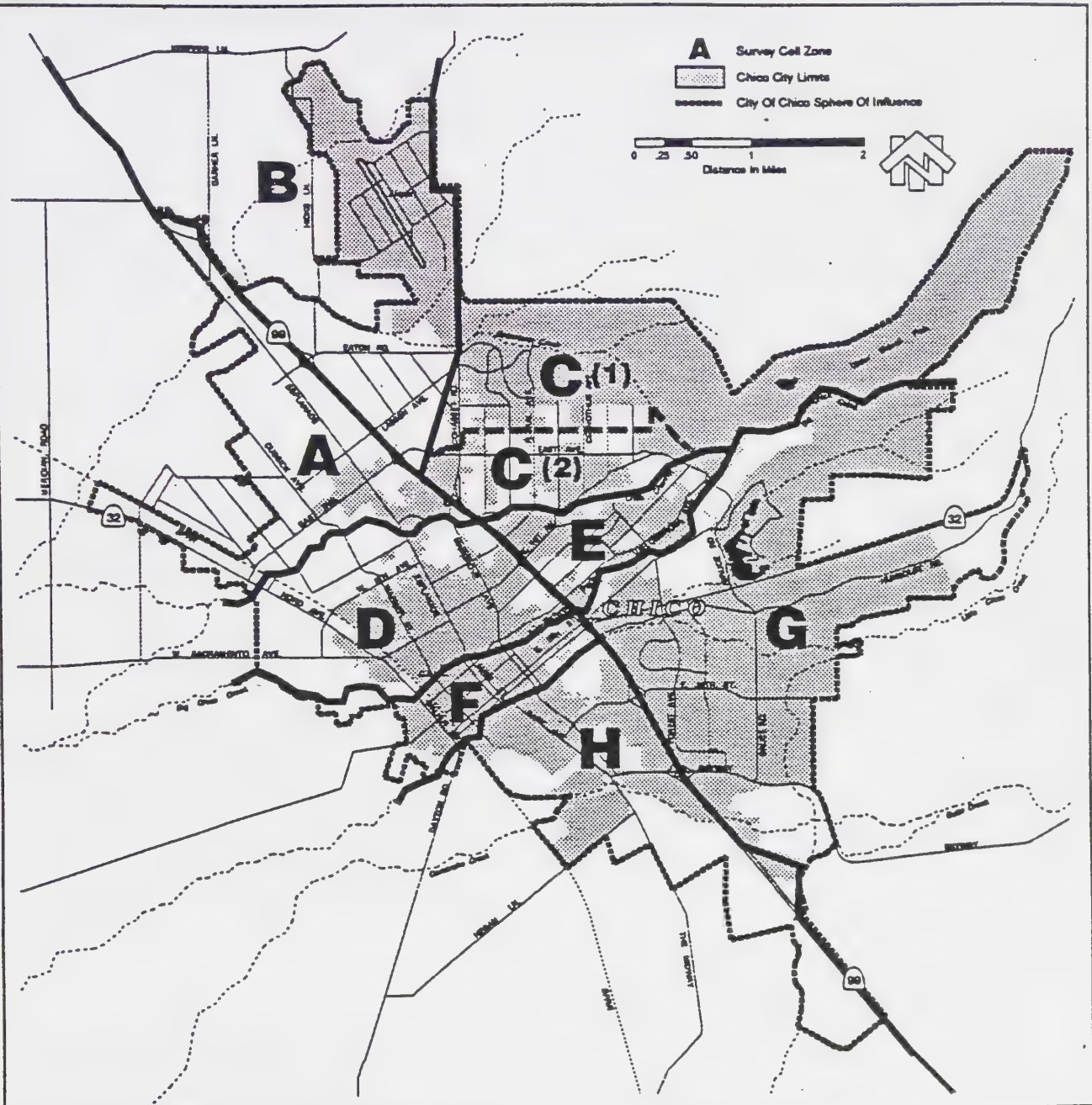
### **Lands to Accommodate Off-Site Constructed Housing**

In addition to the land use designation as contained in the General Plan Holding Capacity Analysis previously discussed in this section, there are areas which have been zoned for mobile homes and manufactured housing. In addition to those sites which have been specifically zoned for these types of use, the Chico Municipal Code allows for mobile home parks in all zoning districts with a Use Permit.

The County permits the placement of off-site constructed housing on permanent foundations in all residential zones and mobile homes in many. The City should amend its code to permit such housing on permanent foundations on individual lots in all residential zones.



Map 4.3  
 '81 CHICO AREA LAND USE SURVEY CELL ZONE MAP



### Vacant Residential Land (Total Acreage)

Zone A	Zone B	Zone C(1)	Zone C(2)	Zone D	Zone E	Zone F	Zone G	Zone H
RR 175.1	RR 0.0	RR 0.0	RR 0.0	RR 6.4	RR 0.0	RR 19.0	RR 150.6	RR 107.5
LDR 451.3	LDR 247.7	LDR 183.7	LDR 345.6	LDR 198.4	LDR 58.2	LDR 0.5	LDR 1700.7	LDR 18.1
MDR 76.1	MDR 33.7	MDR 3.6	MDR 3.6	MDR 4.1	MDR 0.0	MDR 0.0	MDR 243.6	MDR 0.0
HDR 31.3	HDR 0.0	HDR 0.0	HDR 0.0	HDR 5.2	HDR 0.0	HDR 2.0	HDR 364.8	HDR 2.7

Prepared By The City Of Chico Planning Division 64887 CDR

Key: RR - Rural Residential (.5 to 4 D.U./Acre)  
 LDR - Low Density Residential (6 D.U./Acre)  
 MDR - Medium Density Residential (14 D.U./Acre, 30 BDR/Acre)  
 HDR - High Density Residential (25 D.U./Acre, 60 BDR/Acre)

## 4.8 CONSTRAINTS TO DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSING

Because housing is a fixed asset with a life of 30 to 50 years and is an integral part of the community where it is located, it is essential for the community to exercise reasonable influence over its location and production.

The question is not whether the local government, representing the community, is regulating housing, the question is whether the regulatory action is counter-productive in terms of increasing the cost of and/or hindering housings integration with the other essential services of the community.

### Governmental Constraints

Although there are several components of housing production which are beyond the control of local government, such as the cost and availability of mortgage capital, labor, and materials, there are key elements which are directly controlled by local government and are, thus, legitimate subjects of inquiry for the Housing Element. Governmental constraints are those imposed by the government which either limit the number of housing units to be built or increase the costs of those units which are built. Constraints increase costs by either adding direct specific expenses, such as street improvements or development fees, to the cost of a housing unit, or by increasing the time necessary to build the unit, thereby increasing the builder's incidental costs such as interest payments or labor costs. All costs are ultimately passed on to the occupant of the housing unit either in higher mortgage payments or rent. Governmental constraints can be classified in three basic categories: those which impose regulation, those which add direct costs and those which result in time delays. Regulations and time delays result in increased costs, but they cannot be calculated as easily as direct costs such as fees. The most obvious and significant factors falling within the influence of local government are:

### LAND USE CONTROLS

Land use controls can affect the cost of housing if they artificially limit the supply of land available for development and/or limit the type of housing that can be built in a city to certain types which are less affordable. The General Plan and Zoning Ordinance which implements the General Plan are tools used by cities to guide the development of land, including regulations for location, density and intensity. The City of Chico's land use designations allow for a range of housing types. Land use and density categories are sufficient and match well with local housing need.

Land use controls which can impact a city's ability to provide affordable housing include open space and off-street parking requirements. Because these on-site

improvements are land intensive they increase the cost of land development by reducing the unit density while adding landscaping and parking area development costs. Open space and parking standards are typically determined by surveying similar communities and what the local experience has indicated is appropriate. The City of Chico off-street parking requirements all residential land uses, reflects typical standards found elsewhere around the State, especially among similarly sized communities. The standard for apartment development is two spaces for two and three bedroom units with an additional space required for each bedroom above three. This standard provides for adequate off-street parking for tenants and visitors and permits emergency vehicle access and circulation.

Open space standards do not exceed those used in other cities of comparable size. Particularly, in Chico these standards reflect a strong community value in open space and the role it plays in the overall quality of life of the City's residents. Open Space standards for conventional lot-by-lot development is 60 percent open space. This requirement is inclusive of driveways, uncovered patios and swimming pools or other hardscape intended for outdoor use. In considering a minimal 6,000 square foot lot, a home would need to be in excess of 2,000 square feet to exceed this standard. Planned development procedures provide for the clustering of residential units and the concentration of open space for common use. Indeed, the City has consistently encouraged this type of development as one method of providing different housing types at more affordable levels.

An amendment to the General Plan or zoning ordinance involves relatively extensive review (including environmental review), notices and hearings mandated by the State. Processing time for an amendment takes at least 45 days and at the end of that period there is not assurance of approval. It is worth noting, that the City is in the process of updating its General Plan and will complete this task within this Housing Element cycle. Land use issues will be among the most important issues addressed.

## **BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Building standards are essential to ensure safe housing, although some codes and standards may constrain the development or preservation of affordable housing. The City of Chico has adopted the Model Codes consisting of the Uniform Building Code, Uniform Fire Code, Uniform Mechanical Code, Uniform Plumbing Code, and the National Electric Code. The City operates a code enforcement program employing one full-time Code Enforcement Officer. Enforcement involves insuring that development within the City conforms to the standards contained in the Chico Municipal Code, which includes the above Uniform Codes by reference.



**Local Exceptions to Uniform Codes.** The City of Chico enforces the Uniform Codes noted above, notwithstanding adherence to the following exceptions:

- ▶ CMC 16R.02.020 - Allows the continued use and occupancy of habitable space within a dwelling unit with a ceiling of less than seven (7) feet, if the room is equipped with or served by a device or devices capable of detecting products of combustion and approved by the Fire Chief.
- ▶ CMC 16R.02.025 - Modifies UBC requirements for parapets by not requiring parapet walls on single family homes under certain conditions where the UBC would otherwise require them.

City Codes do not include any other exceptions from the UBC which affect residential construction. The impact of the modifications clearly is to encourage habitable dwellings where they might otherwise be prohibited.

**Housing Rehabilitation.** Coordination between the housing rehabilitation program and building code enforcement is maintained by the City. The City staffs a housing rehabilitation specialist who works with homeowners and contractors to ensure cost effective rehabilitation. Rehabilitation projects are inspected by the City using qualitative criteria. All rehabilitation improvements done by the contractor must meet Uniform Building Code standards. It is , however common for certain features of the rehabilitated dwelling to remain in non-compliance with the UBC, if they do not pose a health and safety risk to the occupants.

#### ON- AND OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS

The City requires the provision of certain on- and off-site improvements in conjunction with residential development. These improvements include compliance with street improvement standards including the provision of fire hydrants, street lighting, storm drainage and sanitary sewer facilities. California Water Service extends water mains and service lines within the urban area. As noted above the City is updating its General Plan which will include community design policies. The update will include a review of the City's street improvement standards which may result in changes to the Chico Municipal Code. It is not known at this time what changes will be proposed. Program 15 provides for review of its design criteria and improvement standards expressly for the purpose amending those standards which result in excessive cost without providing necessary benefits. This review will follow adoption of the updated General Plan.



## PERMITS AND FEES

Development fees can be assessed against residential projects as a means of providing funding for capital improvements necessitated by the cumulative demand of residential development. Such fees are typically imposed as a condition of subdivision, but can be included in those fees collected at the time of issuance of building permits. Improvements frequently considered for financing through development fees include schools, parks, storm drainage and transportation facilities (traffic signals, street widening, bicycle paths, etc.). The City of Chico has adopted the fees listed in Table 4-30 to offset the cost of improvements due to growth in the community. All fees are based on a nexus study conducted by the City to determine the actual cost of providing services. The fees charged to new development are similar to fees charged for other communities in the North Valley.

While the City's development fees increased from \$7,044.66 to \$11,209.25 (59 percent), development fees on an annual basis remained virtually a constant 7 percent of the average assessed value of the typical 1,500 square foot residential unit. During the same period of time the average assessed value, of the same home, increased \$53,836 (52 percent) as a result of market forces. This increase had a far greater impact on the affordability of single family residences compared to increases in fees. Thus market forces accounted for approximately 92 percent of the total increase in the cost of the typical single family home, with development fees responsible for the remaining 8 percent. Development fees are necessary to provide a minimal level of service insuring the welfare and safety of the community. Alternative forms of funding are needed to support local services and to fund affordable housing. Reducing impact fees would simply defer maintenance and development of infrastructure and services resulting in higher long-term costs to the City and its residents.

Table 4.30  
DEVELOPMENT FEE COMPARISON

Year	Plan Check Fee	Permit Fee	Sanitary <sup>1</sup> Sewer Fee	Storm Drain	Street Facility Fee	Park Fee	CUSD <sup>2</sup> School Fee	Development Fee—Total	Assessor's <sup>3</sup> Valuation	Development <sup>4</sup> Fee Percentage of Valuation
1987	363.40	678.20	2,854.00	399.00	500.00	0.00	2,250.00	7,044.60	102,500.00	6.8%
1988	363.40	678.20	2,970.00	406.00	1,331.00	0.00	750.00	6,498.60	105,000.00	6.2%
1989	375.10	696.60	3,034.00	413.00	1,334.00	1,199.00	840.00	7,891.70	140,000.00	5.6%
1990	388.88	710.40	3,144.00	420.00	1,382.00	1,358.00	870.00	8,273.28	160,000.00	5.1%
1991	630.90	1,098.35	3,168.00	426.00	1,404.00	2,112.00	2,370.00	11,209.25	160,000.00	7.0%

Source: Building Division/Chico Unified School District

<sup>1</sup>Includes trunkline, sewer main and water pollution control fees.

<sup>2</sup>School fees provided by Chico Unified School District.

<sup>3</sup>Valuation provided by Butte County Assessor's Office/Chico Board of Realtors. Based on an average three (3) bedroom home.

<sup>4</sup>Based on 1500 sq. ft. house with 400 sq. ft. garage.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES, SEWER, WATER**

**Wastewater Treatment.** Wastewater collected in the City Sewer Service Area is transported to the Chico Water Pollution Control Plant. Flows reaching the plant are presently less than its reliable treatment capacity. The City has expanded the capacity of the plant.

**Water Supply.** The California Water Service Company (Cal Water) service area includes the entire Chico Sphere of Influence. The Chico area water distribution system includes 62 deep wells and fire storage tanks to boost water pressure when necessary. The system can supply about 89 million gallons per day. Peak demand has reached only 40 million gallons per day.

**Gas and Electricity.** The Pacific Gas and Electric Company provides gas and electric service to the City of Chico. The company charges new developments for extending service and trenching utility lines. Most of these fees are refunded according to regulations set forth by the California Public Utilities Commission.

**Public Services.** Law enforcement and fire protection services are adequate and are planned to provide increased services as the population in the City of Chico grows. These services are provided for the City of Chico. The Chico Unified School District has a plan to accommodate growth for a five year planning period.

## **FEDERAL AND STATE ACTIONS**

Various State and Federal policies can have significant impacts on the affordability of housing. Most important of these policies are those Federal monetary policies which influence interest rates. Interest rates affect both construction costs (construction loans) and long-term mortgage costs, thereby having a significant direct impact on the affordability of housing (California Statewide Plan Update, 1990,24). Although interest rates are below the 13-14 percent range of the early 1980s, they are not expected to return to the 5-6 percent range of the 1950s and 1960s.

Changes in both State and Federal policy have severely limited the availability of low interest rate loans and tax credits for rental housing development. The Federal government has also significantly reduced its involvement in direct subsidy and construction programs to meet the housing needs of low and very low income households.

## ARTICLE XXXIV

Article XXXIV of the California State Constitution requires state public bodies to obtain voter approval before they "develop, construct or acquire low income rental units" (California Department of Housing and Community Development, 1980). This legislation can cause a constraint to the development of affordable housing unless the community submits a referendum to the voters allowing the development of affordable units. The other approach would be to structure the financing of affordable units so as to not to require Article XXXIV referendum.

To provide authorization for low income projects, the voters of the City of Chico approved 500 units in March 1977 and an additional 250 units in November 1979. Of the total of 750 units approved, 250 units were specifically allocated to the Butte County Housing Authority (BCHA). 50 of the units allocated to the Housing Authority have been developed and a 60 unit project is pending. Of the remaining 500 units, 370 have been constructed, with another 72 units allocated, leaving 57 units available for development under the referendum authorization. The City placed a measure on the June 1992 ballot for 500 units which was defeated.

## PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

The City has established the Community Development Department, consolidating the planning, building, housing and plan check engineering divisions to improve processing of development proposals.

The City has established a Development Review Committee to review preliminary project proposals and provide timely comments prior to submittal of working drawings. The DRC has been widely praised by design professionals and developers. The weekly DRC meetings are available at no cost and provide an informal meeting environment at which City development review staff and utility providers review and respond with written comments to preliminary project plans. This process has reduced the number of plan revisions needed as a result of the plan check process. It is also worth noting that the City has contracting with a consultant who is conducting an organization study. The purpose of this study is to recommend actions the City can take to improve its efficiency and productivity within the current budget constraints. It is anticipated that changes to the structure of the Community Development Department will have a positive impact on the development review process.

In addition to the above study, the City Manager has established five ad hoc staff task forces responsible for developing recommendations on staff training, customer service, administrative procedures, equipment replacement, staff performance evaluations and employee recognition. The result of these efforts will be to improve the City's service to the



community and continue to proactively increase the efficiency of the development review process. Compared with other cities in Northern California, Chico's development review process ranks similarly in processing time. Development review has increasingly become a complex, regulatory process. Chico continues to seek ways that this process can be made more efficient without sacrificing the public's welfare or safety.

The City's various review procedures are summarized below. Development in the unincorporated area is subject to similar reviews and those County processes are summarized in the Butte County Housing Element of the General Plan.

**Environmental Review.** After receipt of a project application or request for review of a City project, staff initially reviews the proposal to determine if it is subject to environmental review or exempt. If a project is exempt (ministerial reviews such as building permits do not receive environmental review), no further action is required, and the application is processed without restriction by environmental review time limits. However, only relatively minor projects are typically exempt from detailed review.

If the project is subject to further environmental review, staff prepares an Initial Study (or environmental evaluation) to determine the potential environmental impacts of the project. The Planning Director then determines, based on the study, whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or negative declaration is to be prepared. The Director may also require the submittal of additional information, such as a traffic or storm drainage analysis to justify the determination.

The minimum time required to prepare a negative declaration, and make it available for public review and comment is 30 days, although 45 days is more common. If additional information is requested the time frame is extended by the time necessary to prepare that information. The overall time frame includes a State mandated 21 day review period (30 days for projects requiring State review and/or approval) and lead time required for providing notice and preparing the evaluation.

If a determination is made that an EIR is required, there is no typical time frame. The time to prepare the EIR is dependent on the complexity of the project and issues involved. Time periods will range from an absolute minimum of 6 months (highly unlikely) to several years.

The environmental review process requires the decision making body (City Council or Planning Commission) to review and certify the environmental documentation in making their final decision on a project. In order to expedite the process, staff routinely processes the environmental review at the same time the project is being reviewed by staff and scheduled for public hearing. In general, this saves the project applicant 30-45 days of processing time. However, under the Code, the environmental determination of the Planning

Director is appealable to the City Council and, in the event an appeal is filed, application processing is delayed by approximately 30 days.

Again, it must be emphasized that all projects require environmental review at some level, including not only private projects, but all City projects and many City actions as well, since these actions are defined as projects.

**General Plan Amendment.** A General Plan Amendment can be initiated by the Planning Commission, City Council or a private applicant. There are no required time frames for the processing of a General Plan Amendment other than the overriding limitations imposed by the State Permit Streamlining Act (adopted locally as CMC 2.74 et. seq.), which provides that all applications will be processed within 6 months after the adoption of a negative declaration or within one year if an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to be prepared.

Once environmental review is completed, the Planning Commission schedules a public hearing and typically will decide the issue within 60 days of receipt of the complete application. The proposal is then forwarded to the City Council and further public hearings are scheduled. The City Council action is usually completed within 90 days after initial submittal of the application -- assuming a negative declaration is approved.

**Prezone/Rezone.** A prezone or rezone may be initiated by the City Council, Planning Commission or applicant. It is subject to the Permit Streamlining Act time frames and is subject to environmental review as discussed above. Once the process is complete, a public hearing is scheduled before Planning Commission, with action typically occurring within 45 days of receipt of application. Once the Planning Commission has made its recommendation, the item is scheduled for hearing before the City Council, with final action typically occurring 60-75 days after initial receipt of the application.

**Use Permit/Variances.** Use permits and variances are initiated by an applicant and subject to environmental review. There are two types of use permits and variances. The first are administrative permits approved directly by the Planning Director after providing public notice. These permits are for minor projects and are almost always exempt from environmental review. Typical processing time is 30 days, or less. These permits may be appealed to the Planning Commission, in which case the processing time is the same as for any other use permit or variance.

All other use and variance permits are heard by the Planning Commission. Typically, these hearings occur within 30 days of submittal of a complete application. Unless appealed, the Planning Commission decision is final and the permit is approved or denied. Should an applicant or affected party be dissatisfied with the Commission's action, then an

appeal is made to the Appeals Board within 15 days of the action. The Appeals Board then has 45 days in which to render a decision, which is referred to the City Council at the next regular meeting and placed on the consent agenda for ratification, unless the permit is removed for further discussion (four affirmative votes of the Council) . If Council removes the item for further discussion, typically the appeal is heard and decided 15-30 days after it appears on the Council Consent Agenda. If the item is appealed, the total period for final resolution is 90-105 days; but often much less.

**Subdivision/Parcel Maps.** Subdivision applications have the most extensive and technical requirements for a complete submittal. Applicants who utilize the Development Review Committee process, are usually able to better determine the extent of information required for a complete submittal because of the initial informal review with staff and utility representatives. Once a complete subdivision application is submitted, State law requires the City to complete and make an environmental determination within 50 days. The Planning Commission usually considers a subdivision map 30 days after environmental review has been completed and noticed for public review. Continuance of consideration of a subdivision may occur only with the consent of the applicant.

Subdivisions which require a modification of City standards or when an appeal of the Planning Commission decision is filed, are considered by the City Council within 30 days of Planning Commission consideration. The 30 day period is set by State law and may be extended only with the consent of the applicant.

**Boundary Line Modification/Minor Land Division.** These minor subdivision applications are administratively approved by staff within 30 days of submittal of a complete application, unless an appeal is filed. An appeal of staff approval is considered by the Planning Commission in 15-30 days, and if further appealed, considered by the City Council in an additional 15-30 days. Most of these application are exempt from environmental review.

**Development Review Committee/Architectural Review Board.** The lead time for the Development Review Committee is 7 days; 10 days for the Architectural Review Board. The Development Review Committee meets weekly and the ARB meets the first and third Wednesday of each month.

## **Non-Governmental Constraints**

As expressed earlier, housing development involves many varied participants, any one of which can effectively slow or stop production. Frequently the market creates its own impediments. In such instances there is generally little that local government can do to correct market imperfections, such as labor management difficulties, poor contractor/sub-



contractor relationships, or materials shortages caused by trade disputes. In other instances market impediments are caused by government, but cannot be alleviated by local government. For example, federal monetary policy will directly affect the supply and cost of mortgage capital and state energy policies will directly affect the supply of and demand for insulation.

There is much public concern about the rapid escalation of housing prices. While government regulations contribute to an extent to this upward spiral, as do the forces of inflation, an often overlooked reality is the influence of the market itself—buyers and sellers—upon housing prices. For example, the second time home purchaser repeatedly rejects "basic" houses, preferring instead the dwelling with substantial amenities and other extras. This is a reaction to the fact that a family's home is usually its largest, if not only, financial investment (savings).

Areas of major non-governmental constraint concern are listed below.

#### LAND AVAILABILITY

Chico has an abundant supply of vacant residential land for development. As shown in Map 4.3, much of the vacant land is located in the south eastern portion of the City limits. Vacant residential land to support a maximum of 18,815 people exists under current zoning within the City limits (refer to Tables 4.27 and 4.28). Much of this vacant residential land has constraints that limit development potential, including lack of available services and environmental constraints. Residential land readily available for development after applying the criteria noted below under environmental constraints could support approximately 6,790 new housing units, over 2,500 units more than projected by the regional housing allocation. Land available for development of low income housing (medium and high density residential land) could accommodate in excess of 1,400 units over the approximate 1,900 unit projected need. Large vacant sites zoned or otherwise committed to multiple family housing are shown in Map 4.4. Again, these sites fit the strict criteria listed below.

The projected regional housing allocation demonstrates the need for 4,161 units from 1991 - 1997. Chico's supply of vacant residential land is more than adequate to meet the total housing need. The vacant residential lands are distributed across the entire range of densities and locations, making them well positioned to meet the housing need described in this element (refer to Table 3-28). The environmental constraints section below further expands this discussion regarding availability of land for multiple-family residential development.



## CONSTRUCTION COSTS

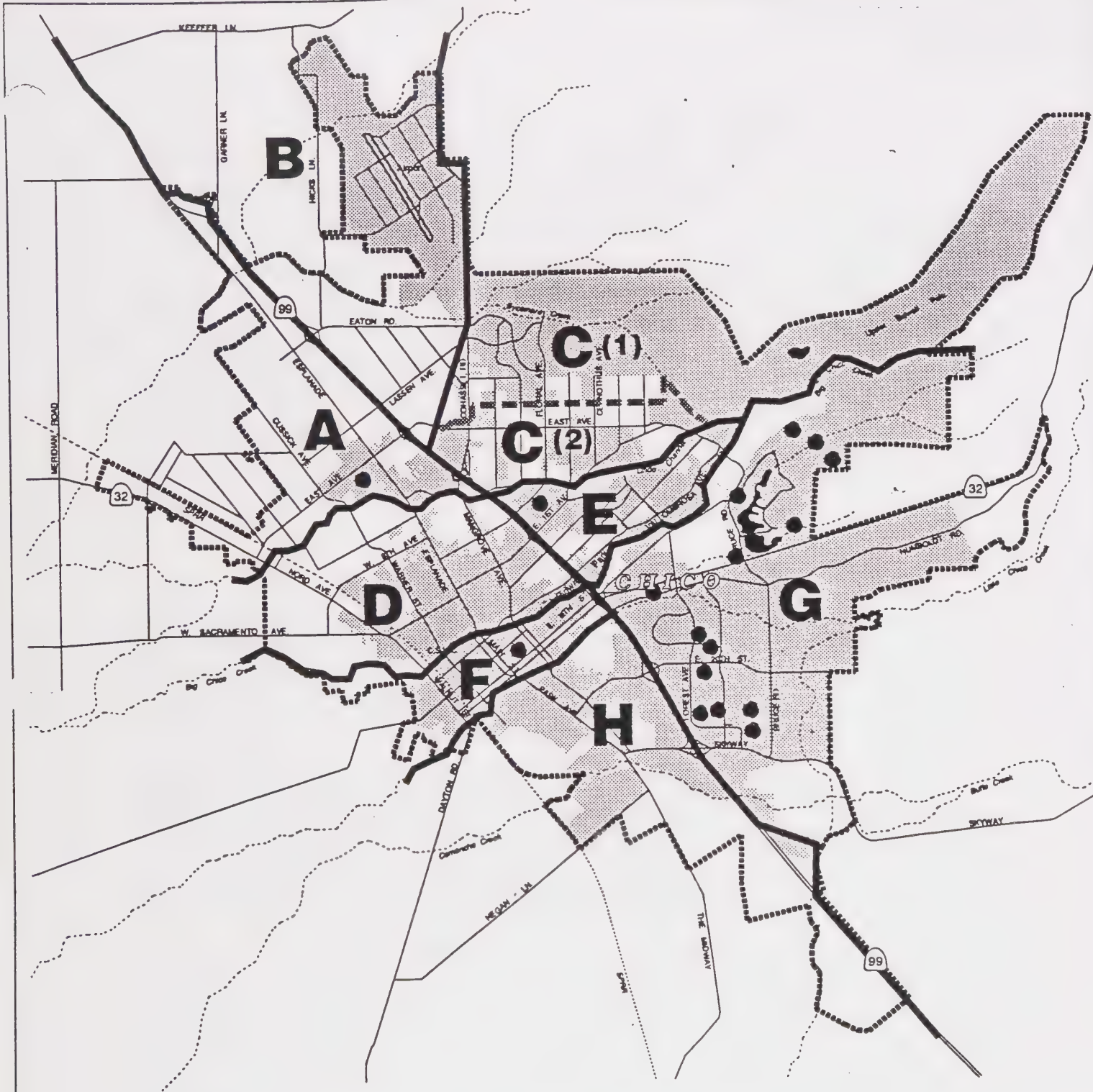
To dramatize the unaffordable nature of new construction in Chico, the following example demonstrates that even an apartment sized house cannot be constructed at an affordable level. Discussions with new residential developers indicate a typical construction cost of about \$50 per square foot, resulting in \$42,500 in "hard costs" for an 850 square foot apartment or condominium, a very small unit by today's standards. Assuming improved land costs of \$50,000 per unit, the finished unit would cost a minimum of \$92,500 without accounting for profit or the cost of construction financing. Assuming the unit sold for \$100,000, debt service on this amount would require rent payments of \$850 per month (excluding other housing costs). If a homeowner were to make a down payment of 10 percent on a \$100,000 house, a mortgage of \$90,000 would be required. Debt service on this amount (assuming a 30 year mortgage at 10 percent interest) would average about \$790 per month. Comparing these figures to Chico's current income profile, the average household in the City would not even be able to afford this small unit.

## AVAILABILITY OF FINANCING

In the wake of the savings and loan crisis, credit has been less available and more difficult to qualify for than in the 1980s. The current phenomenon is not particular to Chico, nor does the City have the capacity to improve the lending environment. Currently interest rates are at their lowest levels in 15 years. This has stimulated the housing market. The availability of financing is not considered a constraint unique to Chico.

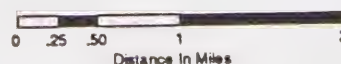
Since 1989, the City has operated a down payment assistance program for first time homebuyers and to date 50 families have been assisted. In addition 36 households have participated in the urban self help program. These two programs have provided the City with an opportunity to work with the local residential lenders. This experience indicates that residential loan funds for homeownership are available in all neighborhoods. There is no evidence of redlining either overt or subtle. One program being considered is the establishment of a lending pool that could underwrite borrowers that do not meet the institutionalized standards.

Map 4.4  
'92 CHICO AREA RESIDENTIAL LAND SUITABILITY MAP



'92 CHICO AREA RESIDENTIAL LAND SUITABILITY MAP

- A** Survey Cell Zone
- Chico City Limits
- City Of Chico Sphere Of Influence
- Vacant Medium & High Density Residential Sites of 1 Acre or More



Prepared By The City Of Chico Planning Division 08/92 CDS

Source: City of Chico Planning Division, August 1992

Developers of multi family housing do complain that construction financing is not available or available at a reasonable cost. The fluctuations in rates and availability is a macro economic variable and not within the influence of the City. The City is evaluating the feasibility and appropriateness of using its Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund to provide construction financing.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Since adoption of the previous Housing Element in 1986, additional environmental issues have been identified which effect development. Major planned development in southeast and northeast Chico have been impacted most. These areas are characterized by a thin mantel of hydric soils overlaying lava cap, creating shallow drainages, vernal pools and arroyos. These formations are generally categorized as wetlands, requiring authorization of the Army Corps of Engineers and in some instances, the State Department of Fish and Game prior to development. The land suitability analysis above, reflects mostly these constraints within the southeast and northwest portions of Chico. The City has approached this analysis by taking the most conservative position possible. The following criteria was used to categorize medium and high density residential sites which would be suitable and available for development within the planning period (1991-1992).

- a. The site is appropriately designated and /or zoned for medium or high density residential development.
- b. The site is vacant or is significantly underdeveloped and does not require redevelopment.
- c. The site is unconstrained by current environmental issues, such as wetlands, rare and endangered plant species, etc.
- d. The site has public facilities and services available or such facilities can be extended in a timely and cost effective manner.
- e. The site is larger than one acre in size.

Although this conservative methodology places a majority of the land designated for medium and high density residential use (approximately 900 acres) in categories not readily or moderately developable, it clearly shows that over 230 acres remain which provides a vacant land surplus of over 40 percent of that needed to meet the City's regional housing allocation. It is also worth noting, that land categorized as "readily developable" is located within the city limits. Even in instances where "moderately developable" sites may exist outside the city limits, current development policies require connection to city sanitary



sewers prior to development. Sanitary sewer trunk lines extend through much of the urban area allowing sites not within the City to connect to the system and develop despite being unannexable. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that all lands currently impacted by environmental constraints will remain, all or partially, undevelopable for the extent of the planning period.

Current factors affecting the ability to produce multiple family housing units include a vacancy rate in excess of 8 percent, a slumping economy and construction industry and a reduced availability of construction and long-term financing for this sector of the market. This lack of apartment construction in the short-term will be partially off-set by the higher vacancy rate which has reduced rents in recent months.

In addition, the City is engaged in a comprehensive update of its General Plan and will evaluate land use needs and scenarios in that process, addressing the housing needs of the community over a 30 year period. It is the City's position that adequate supplies of land for all residential needs currently exist and that additional land will be identified or become available during the planning period.

Other environmental constraints include soil contamination, agricultural land preservation, surface and groundwater quality, flooding, hillside development and air quality and are discussed below.

**Soil Contamination.** Approximately 50 to 60 acres of land in southeast Chico is impacted by this constraint. This area was used as a landfill in the past and has been found to contain elevated lead levels. A portion of this land is designated for commercial use and will not effect residential development.

**Agricultural Land Preservation.** The agricultural greenline was drawn in 1983. The greenline marks Chico's Sphere of Influence on the south and west and protects prime agricultural land from further encroachment by urban development. Jointly adopted by the City and County, development was directed to the southeast and northeast where poorer agricultural soils exist. As noted above, however, these soils support other environmentally sensitive areas.

**Surface and Groundwater Quality.** The City has traditionally disposed of urban storm water run-off through underground systems which carry it to one of five waterways that pass through the Urban Area. Among the issues of concern are downstream flooding and the protection of the fish and wildlife habitat provided by these waterways. The creeks and channels also provide corridors for linear parks which have been or are planned to support passive recreation opportunities. Alternatives to conventional storm water management systems are being evaluated.



Protection of the groundwater resource is important since the deep aquifers beneath the area supply all of the City's drinking water. Planned development areas along the foothill portions (eastside) of the City are being studied for value as recharge areas for these aquifers. Analysis of the aquifers is also being conducted to determine storage capacity and the short and long-term impact of the drought.

**Air Quality.** The Chico Urban Area has been identified as a carbon monoxide and ozone non-attainment area. In compliance with the State Clean Air Act, the City has prepared CO and Ozone Attainment Plans establishing mitigation measures designed to comply with Clean Air Standards.

## **4.9 HOUSING PROGRAMS**

### **Assessment of Previous Housing Element Objectives (1986-1991)**

Chico has achieved a moderate degree of success in meeting the housing goals set forth in the 1986-1991 General Plan Housing Element. An assessment of the effectiveness of each program, continuing needs, and recommended 1992-1997 programs to provide for the continuing needs, are outlined below.

#### **PROGRAM 1: HOUSING CONDITION SURVEY**

**Previous Objective:** To conduct a comprehensive survey of all housing within the City to identify locations and concentrations of substandard housing.

**Evaluation:** The City Council appropriated \$15,000.00 in the 1990-91 budget to conduct a housing inventory and condition survey. The City Planning, Building and Housing Offices conducted a housing condition survey of the older City neighborhoods in August, 1991. Approximately 13 percent of the 12,000 housing units surveyed were identified as needing rehabilitation.

**Continuing Need:** This objective has been accomplished, however a need exists to maintain an on-going means of measuring the condition of Chico's housing stock.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 32 and 33

## PROGRAM 2.1: NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION-REHABILITATION

**Previous Objective (a):** To continue the City's program for rehabilitating substandard residential units occupied by low and moderate income households qualifying under federal guidelines.

**Evaluation:** Since adoption of the Housing Element in 1986, the City Development Office has rehabilitated 33 housing units. The 25 unit per year estimate noted in the prior element was in error and should have stated 25 units for the planning period. The program was operated with a one-half staff person from 1986 to 1989 at which time a full time staff person was assigned. This increased staff commitment resulted in the City rehabilitating 33 units during the planning period. The City is an entitlement city under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1975 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. CDBG funds are allocated to housing rehabilitation, community organizations providing services to low income persons, and to public improvements.

**Previous Objective (b):** To consider expanding the rehabilitation program to include non-owner occupied units occupied by qualifying households, subject to agreement with the owner limiting rents and occupancy. Such an expansion would require increase in funding allocation, or reduction in available funding for owner occupied rehabilitations.

**Evaluation:** The City continues to pursue this objective. Expansion to non-owner occupied housing units will require leveraging of increased funds. This may be feasible if additional federal funds become available. A federal program has been established which will provide funds to local governments for the purpose of combining and leveraging CDBG rehab and RDA low and moderate income housing funds.

**Previous Objective (c):** To consider expanding the rehabilitation program by increasing the qualifying income levels. Except for basic code corrections, funding of rehabilitations for households with incomes above the federally established maximums would be local.

**Evaluation:** This objective has been considered, however with a decreasing pool of funds available the decision has been made to continue to target funds to low income households. In order to expand the rehab program to moderate income households additional funding would be necessary.

**Continuing Need:** Although a majority of Chico's housing units have been constructed since 1970, those units built prior to 1970 represent a significant portion of the area's affordable housing stock. Under existing staffing and funding, the City rehabilitates 8 to 10 housing units a year. Although a relatively small number, this effort retains affordable

owner-occupied housing which increasingly is becoming a precious commodity. During the 1980's, the City, for the first time, became predominantly a City of rental housing units (52 percent). This shift is the result of increased enrollment at California State University, Chico and Butte College and the increased difficulty of first-time home buyers to enter the home ownership market. In order for Chico to retain a balance of affordable owner-occupied and rental housing units, it will be necessary to continue programs such as the rehabilitation program.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 30 and 31

**PROGRAM 2.2: NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION-  
REHABILITATION OUTREACH**

**Previous Objective (a):** To continue the publicizing of availability of rehabilitation funding to qualified households through the media, direct mailings and general referrals, as necessary.

**Previous Objective (b):** To intensify information dispersal in target areas with an identified concentration of substandard units by direct mailings, supplying information to referral agencies, and, possibly door to door contact.

**Evaluation:** The City Housing Office coordinates the housing program and outreach for the City. On a bi-annual timeline, the Community Housing Improvement Project (CHIP), under contract with the City, assists in outreach marketing through the following activities:

- a. Coordinate with special services groups, i.e., Meals on Wheels, Adult Protective Services (Butte County), Independent Living Services of Northern California, etc. On-going communication with these groups is maintained for the purposes of referring possible eligible clients to the program.
- b. Display adds in local newspapers.
- c. Special interest stories in local newspapers.
- d. Brochures distributed to various locations in the community.
- e. Door-to-door distribution of Information.
- f. Annual article in Chico Today publication (distribution to 25,000 residential addresses in Chico).

**Continuing Need:** Publicizing the rehabilitation program is necessary to inform potential qualified households and to increase the community's awareness of the program.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 30 and 31

### **PROGRAM 2.3: NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION-DEVELOPMENT COMPATIBILITY**

**Previous Objective:** To protect existing residential neighborhoods from the adverse impacts of incompatible development by:

- a. Reviewing zoning designations for existing residential areas and, if appropriate, initiate rezoning to a more restrictive designation.
- b. Revise standards to restrict/reduce incompatible development.
- c. Strengthen standards and guidelines utilized by the Architectural Review Board so that incompatible aspects of development can be eliminated or minimized through the review process.

**Evaluation:** Since 1986, the City has processed three large neighborhood rezonings, one initiated by property owners and two by the City Planning Commission. Two of these rezones have occurred north of CSUC, east and west of Warner Street, extending north to West 6th Avenue, and the other involved properties on both sides of Cactus Avenue, north of East Avenue. All three rezones have reduced residential densities, and in the instance of the area east of Warner Street (Citrus School Neighborhood), eliminated future multiple-family uses. The Citrus School Neighborhood and Cactus Avenue rezones were supported by residents desiring to preserve single-family and rural residential lifestyles, respectively. The Warner Street rezone (area west of Warner Street) was initiated by the City to reduce density and resulting traffic safety issues in the area. Likewise, the West Sacramento/Nord Avenue area was rezoned in 1990 to reduce traffic congestion and safety problems. The overall impact of these rezones has been to reduce the potential housing unit infill by several hundred units.

In addition to the above major rezonings, the City has processed many infill rezonings and prezonings which have, because of neighborhood concerns, resulted in lowered density to preserve compatibility between existing and new residential uses.

**Continuing Need:** The community has continued to be concerned about the compatibility of in-fill development within existing residential developments and the compatibility of new suburban development with Chico's older established development. A need has been expressed that standards reflecting the positive traits of older neighborhoods be



required of new development. Such traits include, but are not limited to, pedestrian-oriented residential streets, increased setback or orientation of garages to reduce architectural impact and de-emphasize the presence of autos, reintroduction of residential streets as social linkage within neighborhood, increased mix of compatible land uses.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 5, 7, 35, 36 and 45

### **PROGRAM 3: REVENUE BOND ISSUANCE**

**Previous Objective:** To use authority of the City and Butte County Housing Authority for the issuance of revenue bonds for financing residential development projects. Both single and multiple family housing are eligible for such funding. Issuance of bonds for multiple family development should be conditioned upon 10 percent of the units being available to very low households, 10 percent to low income households, and first floor units to be handicapped accessible. For the units restricted to very low and low income households, a maximum percent of income which can be paid in rent shall be established.

**Evaluation:** Prior to the 1986 Tax Reform, Mortgage Revenue Bonds, or similar tax exempt financing mechanisms, were a significant incentive for housing production. From 1980 to 1986 over 700 units were produced with tax exempt financing providing over 140 units (20 percent) that were assisted for low and very low income households.

After 1986 the assisted requirement was increased from 20 percent to 40 percent and interest rates stabilized, reducing this tool as a viable incentive. Since 1986, the City has assisted one project with tax exempt financing, the Sierra Sunrise Lodge. This project is a 125 unit congregate housing facility for seniors.

The City continues to consider revenue bonds as a tool to produce affordable housing and will assist developers interested in using this resource.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Program 26

### **PROGRAM 4: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO HOUSING**

**Previous Objective:** To facilitate the utilization of innovative programs and approaches to providing housing at affordable costs. Such programs and approaches may include: self help housing construction, cooperative housing projects, off-site construction, land banking, small lot subdivisions and City provided technical assistance. City codes and standards will be modified to eliminate or minimize barriers to the implementation of innovative approaches, so long as minimum safety and community standards are not compromised.

**Evaluation:** Several of the above approaches and programs have been implemented by the City. Small lot subdivisions have been developed under R-2 Medium Density zoning, allowing 4500 square foot lots with 45 foot lot widths and zero lot line design. These standards increase affordability of single family homes through reducing land and off-site improvement costs per individual housing unit. Chico Housing Improvement Project has provided financial and technical assistance for several self help housing projects in the Chico area. Self help housing provides the opportunity to buy down or off-set purchase down payment with "sweat" equity.

City land use regulations provide for planned unit developments and mixed use development. The former option allows increased density and use of different housing types, i.e. clustered housing which can produce more affordable housing. Mixed use zoning allows residential use in combination with commercial or office uses. Although this approach could provide housing units in proximity to services and employment, it has not been used other than in small-scale projects.

The development of residential units above downtown retail shops has been studied, however most buildings are unreinforced masonry construction and will require costly engineering and retrofitting to comply with earthquake building and fire safety standards. If the City adopts a program to inventory and require compliance with seismic standards, consideration could be given to residential units above retail shops.

**Continuing Need:** Housing costs and rents continue to rise, creating formidable barriers to home ownership and requiring many households to overpay to find acceptable housing. Efforts to find innovative approaches to housing that meet the community's housing needs and keep housing more affordable should be sought.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15 and 25

#### **PROGRAM 5: SUBDIVISION LOT SALES**

**Previous Objective:** Encourage the sale of improved subdivision lots to individuals for home construction.

**Evaluation:** Title 18 of the City of Chico Municipal Code (Subdivision Ordinance) requires that all off-site improvements be installed or bonded prior to recordation of a final subdivision map. Subdivisions within the unincorporated portions of the Chico Urban Area, requiring connection to the City of Chico sanitary sewer, must also comply with City subdivision standards. These requirements combined with the State Subdivision Map Act requirements result in uniform land costs. This factor and the presence of several speculative home builders in the area minimize the benefits lot sales to individuals for home construction.

**Recommendation:** No program carry over

#### **PROGRAM 6.1: HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE HOUSING SURVEY**

**Previous Objective:** To identify the extent of the population in need of handicapped accessible units, the type of unit needed and inventory existing accessible units.

**Evaluation:** The Housing Needs section of the existing Housing Element provides a discussion of the disabled population in the City and Urban Area. This discussion describes the Census Bureau criteria for reporting non-institutionalized disabled persons under two categories: work disability and public transportation disability. The definitions for both categories are provided. However, as noted, a direct correlation does not exist between either classification and those persons in need of specialized housing. The analysis defines three disabled groups relative to housing needs: those persons requiring institutional or group care housing, disabled persons without a need for special adaptation of housing, and persons with such a disability as to require housing constructed and or modified specifically to meet their needs.

There are no specific records of the number of accessible units in the Chico Urban Area. Title 25 of the State Health and Safety Code mandates that a minimum of 5 percent of all new rental units be handicap accessible and that all first floor units be handicap adaptable. An accessible unit conforms to all handicap standards, including door and restroom hardware, hallway and door clearances, and access. Adaptable units meet similar requirements except that door and restroom hardware is not required, but construction must allow for installation of such hardware. All first floor units are required to be adaptable, and any additional floors, if elevators are provided. A review of 12 apartment complexes (1356 units) constructed, or in the process of being constructed, since 1988, indicates that approximately 48 accessible and 223 adaptable units have been provided.

**Continuing Need:** Although no specific data exists which provides the number of handicap persons in need of specialized housing, there is clearly a need to communicate between the City and agencies which assist handicap persons.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Program 23

#### **PROGRAM 6.2: HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE HOUSING-CLEARINGHOUSE**

**Previous Objective:** Identify an agency/ies which serves the handicapped population and utilize that agency/ies as a centralized clearinghouse for referral of persons in need of accessible units and to provide information on City funding for rehabilitation of existing units to meet accessibility requirements.



**Evaluation:** Independent Living Center of Northern California provides a variety of services to handicapped and disabled persons. At this time, no formal relationship has been established between the City and I.L.N.C. to act as a clearinghouse for referral of persons in need of accessible units. However, the City has established funds through the private activity bond reserve bond program (Budget Policy D-1-B) for the retrofitting of rental units for handicap use. An applicant must apply to the Housing Office and obtain the property owner's concurrence. Owner-occupied housing units can be retrofitted through the existing City CDBG Rehabilitation program.

**Continuing Need:** A need exists to improve coordination of City information to handicapped and disabled persons and to assist groups and agencies assisting handicapped and disabled persons.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Program 24

#### **PROGRAM 6.3: HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE HOUSING FUNDING**

**Previous Objective:** To provide a funding pool for direct assistance for handicapped persons to modify existing units for accessibility.

**Evaluation:** Refer to Program 6.2

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Program 25

#### **PROGRAM 7: ELDERLY HOUSING**

**Previous Objective:** To encourage development of a variety of housing options for the elderly through funding support (revenue bond issuance or other assistance) and application of development standards reflecting the specific needs of the elderly in housing. Where specific standards are applied to housing development for the elderly, restrictions should be adopted to prohibit its conversion to non-senior use.

**Evaluation:** Community-wide, the City has not developed a program to subsidize senior housing. However, the City has used RDA revenue bond proceeds to assist development of 'The Lodge' at Sierra Sunrise Village, a congregate care facility proposed to contain a total of 140 independent and assisted living units. The City has provided the development funds in exchange for guaranteeing availability of 25 units to low and moderate income persons. The units would be available for a minimum 30 year period, as required by laws governing RDA "set aside" funds.



In addition to the 'The Lodge', the City has issued Mortgage Revenue Bonds to assist in the development of the Sycamore Glen Retirement Center which was constructed in 1986 and contains 120 units, 20 of which are limited to low income residents.

**Continuing Need:** The special groups needs assessment indicates that a need exists for approximately 492 affordable studio and one-bedroom rental units for low income seniors within the five year planning period.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 4, 16, 17 and 18

### **PROGRAM 8: TEMPORARY HOUSING/EMERGENCY SHELTER**

**Previous Objective:** Through cooperation with existing agencies, establish a program to provide temporary housing and/or emergency shelter. The City will research funding alternatives, including redevelopment agency (RDA) funds, Community Development Block Grant, and state and federal grants/funds. Temporary housing programs to be considered include:

- a. Funding assistance to existing agencies.
- b. Through an existing agency, establish a foster housing program.
- c. Establish a temporary housing facility to be operated contractually by an existing agency.

**Evaluation:** Housing for transient, homeless and those seeking emergency shelter is currently provided by several organizations in the community. The City currently provides assistance to local organizations serving the homeless population in two ways:

1. Public service grants from the City's general fund and CDBG program to provide operating funds for organizations providing meals and/or housing vouchers to the homeless.
2. Financial assistance for the development of facilities to house the homeless. The City provides \$250,000 to the Community Action Agency to acquire and rehabilitate a motel to provide transitional housing. This project was also assisted by the Department of Housing and Community Development through the FESG program.

Organizations which assist persons with emergency housing, funded in the 1990-91 budget, include the Catholic Ladies Relief Society, Jesus Center and Northern California Legal Services. These organizations coordinate requests for housing assistance with

the Butte County United Way/FEMA Emergency Shelter Program Local Board which allocates federal funds locally.

Location of a temporary housing facility remains as an outstanding need in the Chico Urban Area. Attempts to find and construct such a facility have met with neighborhood opposition and aborted projects. State housing law will require future element updates to include an assessment of the extent of homelessness in the community and identification of sites for transient/emergency shelter facilities. The Planning Commission, at its meeting of June 3, 1991, directed staff to draft proposed Code amendments related to the siting of such facilities and obtain advisory committee review and recommendation. In the fall of 1991, The Esplanade House was opened as a transitional shelter for homeless families, providing 18 living units. The Salvation Army shelter for homeless persons during Winter months at the National Guard Armory. An average of 30 to 35 persons have been served at this facility over the past two years.

**Continuing Need:** The needs assessment for this special group acknowledges that several types of homelessness exist in the City. Homelessness can involve persons in transition between permanent housing, who may require temporary or transitional housing and services in order to regain a more stable living situation. Households fitting this category of need may be those evicted from housing, families stranded or attempting to relocate in the area and without employment, and persons at-risk or homeless as a result of abuse. Other needs are for non-institutionalized persons suffering from mental illness and transient individuals or married couples without employment or shelter.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 19, 20 and 21

#### **PROGRAM 9.1: CITY CODES: DESIGN CRITERIA AND IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS**

**Previous Objective:** Subsequent to a comprehensive review, amend the City's Design Criteria and Improvement Standards which result in excessive cost without providing necessary benefits. Amend the standards to reflect current cost saving materials and technology. Standards should only be modified in consideration of:

- a. Ensuring that the change does not adversely affect the public health, safety or welfare.
- b. Long term maintenance costs versus short term saving.

**Evaluation:** The City conducted an extensive review of the street improvement and subdivision design standards in 1988. The evaluation resulted in minor changes to the standards.

**Continuing Need:** A need remains to undertake a comprehensive review of these standards to determine what, if any, standards result in excessive cost to the production of housing.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 15 and 45

#### **PROGRAM 9.2: CITY CODES: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

**Previous Objective:** Standards should be examined to determine those which impede design alternatives without providing benefit. Such standards should be modified or eliminated.

**Evaluation:** Since 1986, Title 19 of the City Municipal Code has been comprehensively revised. Among those amendments having the most affect on housing policies was the reduction of residential densities in the R-2 Medium Density and R-3 High Density Residential zoning districts, increased parking requirement for housing in the campus impacted area and restructuring of the Planned Development process. The PD process offers flexibility of design and increased density within all residential zoning districts. In exchange the developer provides added amenities, such as increased open space and recreational facilities and an enhanced design. It should be noted that although the medium and high density residential maximum densities were reduced, in practice, the decrease reflected densities that had been typically achieved under prior standards. RD-1, R-2 and R-3 have been modified to make the second unit easier to develop.

**Continuing Need:** The need to modify or eliminate development standards which reduce flexibility of housing design or innovations without providing off-setting benefits is an on-going concern. Particularly, as housing becomes less affordable, constant effort must be given to ensure that standards, are those minimally needed to provide for the community's health, safety and welfare.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Programs 5, 7, 10, 34, 45, and 46

#### **PROGRAM 9.3: CITY CODES: DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Previous Objective:** Adopt guidelines for compatible project design meeting community standards as a part of the Chico Municipal Code. Such guidelines will provide criteria for project designers and standards for Architectural Review Board project evaluation.

**Evaluation:** In 1987, Architectural Review Guidelines were adopted by the City Council establishing guidelines for designers and standards by which the Architectural Review Board evaluates development plans. Standards for site, building and landscape design are contained in the guidelines. The guidelines do not set rigid design standards or define



specific architectural styles, but rather attempt to provide basic principles of good design and minimum acceptable design standards. City staff and the Architectural Review Board are preparing a design manual which will describe and illustrate how the guidelines should be applied.

**Recommendation:** Refer to Programs 45, and 46

#### **PROGRAM 10: CITY FEES EVALUATION**

**Objective:** Prior to adopting or amending fee schedules, the Council shall be provided with the impact such fee will have on monthly housing costs.

**Evaluation:** City fee schedule adjustments are made annually. Justification for such increases is generally linked to the Engineering News-Record Construction Cost Index and/or increases in processing time or operating costs. The impact of such fees on monthly housing costs has not been evaluated. It should be noted however, that it can be argued that development fees have an insignificant impact on housing costs, reasoning that housing cost is market driven and that development fees are reflected in the price of the land to the developer. A development fee is added to the cost of developing land and results in a reduction of per acre land value or project profit margin, and may not be passed on to the purchase price or rent of the housing unit.

**Recommendation:** Refer to Policy 2.6 and Program 6

#### **PROGRAM 11.1: PERMIT PROCESSING: PROCEDURAL**

**Previous Objective:** To identify those processes which result in delays in project approval, and revise procedures to minimize delays in permit processing and approval.

**Evaluation:** Shortly after establishing the Community Services Department in 1985, an evaluation of the development review process was conducted, resulting in several changes to decrease duplication of review and shorten or streamline the review and approval process. Growing out of this effort was the Development Review Committee (DRC), a no-fee staff level review to provide preliminary comments on proposed projects. The DRC is attended by City staff from those departments and divisions directly involved in the project review process and representatives of the public utilities (PG&E, Cal Water, Cable TV, Pac Bell). Preliminary plans are submitted by the project proponent for discussion at the weekly meetings. A summary of the DRC comments is prepared by the Planning Office staff and sent to the project proponent and DRC staff.

This process has been well received by the development community. By providing preliminary review, in a timely manner, the developer is spared costly delays and



plan revisions late in the plan check process. The City is currently conducting internal audits or its administrative procedures, public contact and materials used to communicate information to the public. Recommendations will be generated from the committee audits for implementation.

**Recommendation:** No program carry over

#### **PROGRAM 11.2: PERMIT PROCESSING: STREAMLINING**

**Previous Objective:** To develop and implement a plan to streamline permit processing, including time lines for the different aspects of project review. Create a coordinating office for overseeing development permit processing. The plan will include a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the streamlining on a continuing basis.

**Evaluation:** In 1985, the Community Services Department (CSD) was formed, consolidating the building, DPW, engineering, planning, parks and operations and maintenance operations under the direction of a single department. This reorganization has reduced duplication of project review and increased staff communication, efficiency and productivity. Permit processing evaluations have been prepared periodically for the City Council and Planning Commission, and the CSD conducts on-going efficiency reviews. Although a plan per se has not been prepared, staff continue to monitor permit processing time, and provide procedures for streamlining plan checking of construction plans.

**Recommendation:** No program carry over

#### **PROGRAM 11.3: PERMIT PROCESSING: STANDARDS**

**Previous Objective:** Revise standards to provide additional information and clarity, minimizing conflicting interpretations and applications between applicants and staff.

**Evaluation:** The creation of the Community Services Department has prompted improved lines of communication between development review staff, reducing discrepancies in formation and interpretation of public policies and standards. CSD publishes a quarterly newsletter information bulletin which is distributed to all local developers, architects, engineers and large property owners. The newsletter provides a line of communication to disseminate changes and clarification of City procedures/policies related to property development, and to provide better coordination with the development community.

In addition to the above changes, City staff have provided improved information on brochures and applications requiring more detailed information at the application submittal stage. More complete information equates, generally, to less processing time. Refer to the discussion under Program 11.1 regarding committee audits.

**Recommendation:** No program carry over

#### **PROGRAM 11.4: PERMIT PROCESSING: PUBLIC INFORMATION**

**Previous Objective:** Develop handouts and/or flow charts to be made available to applicants to explain the processing of an application and the items necessary for a complete application.

**Evaluation:** As noted under Program 11.3, City staff has revised Planning Office brochures and applications with updated information. These publications explain specific permit processes, i.e. land divisions, use permits, variances, rezones, general plan amendments and annexations, and provide the applicant with a list of items needed to submit a complete application. The Building Division also provides numerous handouts regarding an array of building, electrical, plumbing, parking, energy, handicapped, etc., code requirements. The Building Division recently prepared handouts listing items frequently missing from plan check submittals and a handout describing requirements for commercial and multiple-family residential plan check submittals.

#### **PROGRAM 11.5: PERMIT PROCESSING: STAFF APPROVALS**

**Previous Objective:** Develop guidelines and initiate Code amendments permitting review and approval of projects by staff, subject to compliance with development standards, minimizing need for consideration by Council, Commissions and Boards.

**Evaluation:** In 1987, amendments to Title 18 and 19 of the Chico Municipal Code contained provisions streamlining the review procedures for several permitting processes. Among these changes was the creation of the Map Advisory Committee, a staff level committee with authority to review and approve land divisions found to be in compliance with Title 18 and Subdivision Map Act requirements and standards. Although the Planning Commission has retained review of parcel maps and subdivisions, all other land division permits, i.e., boundary line modification, certificate of compliance, minor land division, require only administrative review and approval. Subdivisions, which previously required Council approval as well as Commission approval, now only require Commission approval, with the Council acting only in the case of appeal, or where modifications to the subdivision standards/design criteria are requested.

Also in 1987, the Architectural Review Guidelines were adopted which provide exemptions from the review of the Architectural Review Board (ARB). These exemptions include: single-family residences; changes to building interiors; construction, remodeling, alteration or other changes to existing or new buildings which have received prior approval of the Planning Commission or City Council in connection with a discretionary entitlement, unless ARB review was made a condition of approval, and minor alterations,

enlargements, remodeling, repairs or other changes to an existing building. These changes have reduced the workload of the Commission, ARB and Council and reduced the time necessary to process applications of a minor nature.

**Recommendation:** Refer to Program 45 and 46

## **PROGRAM 12: EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN HOUSING**

**Previous Objective:** To provide a process for the resolution of allegations regarding housing discrimination by continuing to refer such actions to the Butte County Housing Authority, the responsible local agency.

**Evaluation:** The City of Chico continues to refer allegations of discrimination to B.C.H.A., however such incidents are rare. The Fair Housing Act was amended in 1989 adding several substantive provisions, including adding handicapped to the protected groups.

**Recommendation:** Refer to Programs 1,2 and 3

## **PROGRAM 13: CONSERVE EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Previous Objective (a):** Restrict the occupancy or sale of residences rehabilitated through the Community Development Block Grant program to owner occupants or other lower income households, or require repayment of rehabilitation loans at the time of sale. All such units shall be restricted.

**Evaluation:** The City rehabilitation program continues to be limited to owner occupants. CDBG loans are restricted to low and very low income owner occupant households and remain valid only while the residence is occupied by the applicant or other qualified household. Normally, unpaid loans are repaid at time of sale.

**Previous Objective (b):** Restrict the conversion of multi-family units occupied by elderly households to condominium ownership. Units occupied by elderly households which are converted to condominiums will be available to the elderly household through a long term lease (5 year minimum), with the total number of units so reserved not required to exceed 20 percent of the units in the project. Relocation assistance shall be provided to all elderly households displaced by the conversion of units to condominium ownership.

**Evaluation:** Sections 18.38.020 and 18.38.030 of the Subdivision Ordinance of the Chico Municipal Code and the State Subdivision Map Act contain provisions for long-term leases and relocation assistance for elderly, as specified in the above objective.

**Previous Objective (c):** Preserve existing Section 8 housing units by ensuring that adequate multi-family housing is available to meet market demands without eliminating Section 8 units. The city will continue to encourage the development of multiple family units so that such units will comprise fifty percent of housing units in the City, and the vacancy rate for such units shall not fall below five percent.

**Evaluation:** The City's efforts to preserve affordable housing has become more important because many assisted projects are approaching the end of their regulatory period.

The City has established working relationships with the Butte County Housing Authority and the local non-profit housing corporation. In the event an assisted project is threatened with conversion the City can respond quickly by evaluating the financial cost of preserving the units and working with a local sponsor to determine whether the project can be preserved. The has a local resource in its Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund but additional resources from federal and state sources.

**Recommended Program:** Refer to Program 28 and 29



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## BACKGROUND

The city of Chico, founded in 1860 by John Bidwell, has grown to be a center of economic activity in the Tri-County region. It is the home of California State University-Chico, founded as the Chico State Normal School in 1887. Bidwell Park, granted to the City in 1905, is one of the largest public parks in the nation.

The City's first General Plan was adopted in 1961, the second in 1976. This General Plan continues Chico's long established planning tradition. It is the result of nearly three years work by a 41-member Task Force appointed by the City Council. It embodies ideas of the Planning Commission and the City Council as well as suggestions by residents made at public meetings and workshops.

## PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The Draft General Plan has five main purposes:

1. To outline a vision for Chico as a sustainable community - living within its resources - and a strategy for realizing that vision;
2. To provide specific standards for judging whether development proposals and public projects are in harmony with Plan policies and consistent with the concept of a sustainable community;
3. To establish a basis for continuing consultation with Butte County on policies and standards that are within their jurisdiction;
4. To guide design of projects to enhance the character of the community, preserve critical environmental resources, and minimize hazards; and
5. To provide a basis for establishing priorities for the City's capital improvement program and implementation schedule.

The General Plan articulates a vision for the City, but it is not merely a compendium of ideas and wish lists. Plan policies focus on what is concrete and achievable and set forth actions to be undertaken by the City. Because the City's actions must be consistent with the General Plan, regular ongoing use of the Plan is essential. However, because the Plan is both general and long-range, there will be instances when detailed studies are necessary before Plan policies can be implemented.

## PLAN ORGANIZATION

### I Community Design

Establishes policies and guidelines to conserve and promote Chico's unique identity, enhance the special qualities of neighborhoods, and improve Downtown.

### II Land Use, Transportation and Community Development

Establishes the physical framework for development in the Planning Area with policies on growth and expansion, the location and intensity of development, bike, pedestrian and automobile circulation, and standards for public facilities and services. Also included are specific policies which articulate an economic development strategy for the City.

### III Resource Management

Provides the framework for open space and environmental conservation and outlines ways to minimize the impact of safety hazards and noise.

### IV Housing

Summarizes the adopted Housing Element, including all the policies contained in the complete Element.

### V Implementation (published separately)

Summarizes the overall implementation strategy and the roles and responsibilities of City departments and other agencies in carrying out the Plan. It also establishes a framework for project review, using resource-based standards set in the Plan. The Zoning map will be revised to be consistent with the plan's land use proposals.

## CHICO GENERAL PLAN

### SUMMARY

Listed below are key guiding policies that, together with the General Plan Diagram, summarize the vision for Chico's long-range, sustainable and resource-based development embodied in the General Plan. Reference to the full text of the Plan is necessary to determine whether a proposed private or public project is consistent with the Plan. The General Plan also includes additional guiding and implementing policies and explanatory material that will guide Plan implementation, and information on resource-based standards to be used in project review.

### Community Design

#### City Form

Reinforce the compact form of the city.

Create a clear definition of the physical extent of the city.

Emphasize key city entrances.

Minimize the intrusion of Highway 99 and its interchanges on the visual character and form of the city.

### Continuity and Connection

Make improvements to the major corridors traversing the city to heighten their visibility and accessibility; design street and creekside improvements in consideration of their hierarchical role and function within the City.

Restrict the scale and size of major arterials so as to avoid creating barriers within the city; establish design guidelines for scenic roads.

Heighten the visual prominence of the creek corridors that help to establish a sense of orientation and identity within the city.

### Neighborhood Conservation and Development

Reinforce the individual character of existing neighborhoods and districts, and encourage neighborhood rehabilitation and improvement.

Protect and enhance the urban forest that reinforces the image and identity of the community and its older neighborhoods. Encourage positive transitions in scale and character where new development and expansion of existing buildings are proposed.

### Downtown

Reinforce the physical framework which defines the downtown district.

Encourage new development that is urban in scale and character, including buildings of minimum height.

Encourage preservation and enhancement of buildings of special historic and/or architectural interest.

Maintain and enhance a strong pedestrian scale and orientation within Downtown.

Reinforce the role of Plaza Park as the civic and cultural heart of Downtown.

Create stronger visual and physical connections to the Rail Depot.

Improve the physical linkages to the University and Bidwell Park through creek crossings, trails, bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Encourage special events, festivities, and celebrations within streets and public spaces Downtown.

### Diamond Match

Encourage preservation/reuse of identified historic structures within Diamond Match.

Create positive linkages to the surrounding neighborhoods, and encourage a positive connection and orientation to Comanche Creek.

### Commercial Strips

Support beautification of Chico's commercial strips, and encourage infill and adaptive reuse of transitioning commercial developments.

### Large-Scale Commercial and Industrial Projects

Encourage consideration of the context and potential linkages to surrounding areas in site and building design of new commercial and industrial projects.

Encourage a human scale in the design of large-scale projects, use of high-quality materials and finishes and innovative site design for surface parking areas.

Incorporate design features that foster a sense of security.

### New Residential Neighborhoods

Create new neighborhoods oriented to the pedestrian and establish clear and distinctive neighborhood edges, organized around larger streets and natural features such as streams or creeks, and a central focus of activity within each neighborhood.

Mark major entries to neighborhoods, but prohibit the use of high walls and gated entries which isolate areas from one another and create an unfriendly appearance.

pedestrian environment.

Encourage development of farmer's markets and other seasonal events that attract people.

### Foothill Development

Blend foothill development with the surrounding landscape and topography, and diminish its visual prominence.

In steep foothill areas, allow for streets that are kept to the minimum dimension necessary for access and parking to reduce grading.

Encourage careful alignment of new roads to provide maximum view corridors, to the extent other objectives, such as solar orientation and circulation, are not diminished.

### Landmarks and Public Art

Encourage preservation of identified buildings and landscapes of historic significance.



Identify locations for new landmarks and public art at key places within the city fabric.

Encourage development of cultural and arts facilities Downtown and within neighborhoods.

## Land Use

### Growth and Physical Expansion

Promote orderly and balanced growth and infill development by working with the County to establish long-term growth boundaries for the Planning Area, consistent with Plan objectives. Ensure that new development is at an intensity to ensure a long-term compact urban form.

Maintain boundaries between urban and agricultural uses in the west, and urban uses and the hillsides in the east; limit expansion north and south to maintain compact urban form.

### Residential Land Use

Preserve the scale and character of established neighborhoods.

Provide incentives for development of mixed-use neighborhood centers in both new neighborhoods and established neighborhoods that lack them.

Allow and encourage small-lot single-family housing development.

Improve the community orientation of new residential developments.

### Downtown

Maintain and enhance Downtown's vitality and economic well-being, and its presence as the City's symbolic center.

Encourage development of Downtown as a mixed-use activity center with retail and visitor-oriented uses, business and personal services, government and professional offices, communications facilities, civic uses, and high density residential uses.

Provide incentives for infill development, intensification, and reuse of currently underutilized sites in Downtown.

### Commercial and Retail Land Use

Maintain Chico's prominence as the center of retail activity in the Tri-County area.

Promote neighborhood identity and reduce dependence on the automobile by providing local shopping centers that many residents can reach on foot or bicycle.

Encourage pedestrian-oriented design in both new shopping areas and existing centers.

Provide specific sites for automobile-oriented services and limit expansion of "strip commercial" centers along Cohasset Road, East Avenue, and Park and Mangrove avenues.

### Offices and R&D Facilities

Encourage large-scale office development and research and development (R&D) facilities to locate in industrial parks.

Encourage professional and administrative offices to locate in and near Downtown, in commercial centers and, in the case of medical offices, near hospitals.

Allow offices serving local needs within the community on "office only" sites and in mixed-use neighborhood cores as secondary uses.

### Industry

Provide appropriately located areas for a broad range of manufacturing, warehousing, and service uses to strengthen the City's economic base and provide employment for residents. Protect the supply of land suitable for industrial use by not allowing incompatible uses to locate in industrial areas.

Provide sites for non-industrial land uses that complement industrial development or that require an industrial environment.

### Airport

Protect the City's investment in the Municipal Airport and promote airport-related development in the Airport environs.

Prevent development in the Airport environs that will pose hazards to aviation or interfere with or endanger the landing, taking off, or maneuvering of aircraft.

### Special Development Areas

Provide policies to guide development at specific sites critical to Plan implementation, including Diamond Match, CSA 87, Bidwell Ranch, Foothill Park, Humboldt Road-Foothills south of State Route 32, the Airport Environs east of Cohasset Road.

### Jobs/Housing Balance

Strive to maintain a balance between the number of jobs and the number of employed residents in the Planning Area.

## Transportation

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Develop a system of sidewalks and bikeways that promote safe walking and bicycle riding for transportation and recreation.

Provide safe and direct pedestrian routes and bikeways between and through neighborhoods and other places within the Planning Area.

Provide adequate bicycle parking; improve safety conditions, efficiency, and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians through traffic engineering and law enforcement efforts, and provide for shaded through-routes, where possible.

Plan and design pedestrian facilities to meet the needs of disabled persons.

### Transportation System Management (TSM)

Establish a minimum 10 percent trip reduction goal.

Ensure that major employers, including the City, implement TSM programs to reduce peak-period trip generation.

Cooperate with public agencies and other entities to promote local and regional public transit serving Chico.

### Standards for Traffic Level of Service

Strive to maintain traffic LOS C on residential streets and LOS D or better on arterial and collector streets and at all intersections during peak hours.

### Circulation and Street System

Promote safe and efficient vehicle circulation; make efficient use of existing facilities, and through the arrangement of land uses, improved alternate modes, and provision of more direct routes for pedestrians and bicyclists, strive to reduce the total vehicle-miles traveled.

Provide fair and equitable means for paying for future street improvements.

### Neighborhood Streets

Provide for increased connections between and within neighborhoods for bicycles, pedestrians, and, where appropriate, automobiles.

### Parking

Expand public parking programs Downtown to alleviate existing and future shortages.

Require all development outside Downtown to provide off-street parking, but limit parking consistent with other Plan policies related to air quality and resource conservation.

### Goods Movement

Provide adequate circulation and off-street parking and loading facilities for trucks and facilitate intermodal goods delivery.

### Airport

Maintain and improve Chico Municipal Airport for commercial and general aviation and for special aviation needs, including facilities for propeller, turbo, motorcraft and jet aircraft.

### Railroads

Explore opportunities to increase rail passenger and inter-city bus transit services wherever possible.

### Parks and Public Facilities and Services

### Parks and Recreational Open Space

Develop a diversified, high-quality public park system that provides recreation opportunities at a variety of scales for all residents.

Use the creeks as a framework to provide a network of open space.

Locate future neighborhood parks closer to where people live where possible.

Continue cooperative efforts with CARD and CUSD to provide recreational facilities.

### Educational Facilities

Support the efforts by CUSD, CSUC, and Butte College to maintain and improve educational facilities and services.

Encourage CUSD to provide educational facilities with sufficient permanent capacity to meet the needs of current and projected enrollment, and cooperate with CUSD and CARD in coordinating joint use of school facilities for community recreation.

### Water Supply and Wastewater Service

Promote orderly and efficient expansion of public utilities to meet projected needs.

Encourage water conservation with incentives for decreased water use and active public education programs.

### Coordinating and Funding Infrastructure

Coordinate capital improvements planning for all municipal service infrastructure with the direction, extent, and timing of growth.

Establish equitable methods for distributing costs associated with serving new development, including impact fees, where warranted.

### Storm Drainage

Develop a comprehensive storm drainage plan that includes alternative storm control features and use of detention and retention basins.

Establish equitable methods of paying for future storm drainage improvements.

### Community Services

Support efforts to improve and expand health and social services for all segments of the community.

Encourage development of adequate, affordable, and quality child care.

### Resource-based Thresholds and Performance Standards for New Development

Establish and maintain standards for public services and facilities to ensure that service demands of new development do not exceed the capacities of streets, utilities and other public services.

Require new development to pay for mitigating impacts on existing, public services and facilities to maintain service levels.

## Economic Development

Maintain a balanced land use program that provides opportunities for commercial and industrial development.

Actively promote economic development opportunities and knowledge of Chico in the region, state, and nation; maintain a positive small-business climate, and strengthen the City's tax base by encouraging environmentally sensitive development with tax generation potential.

Promote economic development activities that link residents with businesses in the City, such as job training and job development, and facilitate jobs/housing balance.

Encourage agricultural processing and cooperative distribution and marketing of agricultural products grown locally.

Promote high technology and research and development activities, and enhance aspects of the community that help economic development and draw residents to Chico.

Encourage large businesses in Chico to make purchases in the community whenever possible to support local firms.

### Open Space and Environmental Conservation

#### Air Quality

Strive to meet all state and federal air quality standards; reduce generation of air pollutants.

Promote the use of trees and plants in landscaping to reduce air pollutant levels.

Coordinate air quality, transportation, and land use planning with the County and agencies



responsible for air quality management.

### Biotic Resources

Protect habitats that are sensitive, rare, declining, unique, or represent valuable biological resources in the Planning Area.

Preserve and protect areas determined to function as regional wildlife corridors, particularly those areas that provide natural connections permitting wildlife movement between sensitive habitats and areas being considered for future conservation because of their high value.

Provide for no net loss of overall wetland acreage; where such losses may be unavoidable at the project level, require mitigation that meets the no net loss goal.

### Water Quality

Enhance the quality of surface water resources of the Planning Area and prevent their contamination.

Comply with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's regulations and standards to maintain and improve groundwater quality.

Where feasible, maintain the natural condition of waterways and flood plains and protect watersheds to ensure adequate groundwater recharge and water quality.

### Open Space

Maintain hillsides and viable agricultural lands as open space for resource conservation and preservation of views.

Preserve and enhance Chico's creeks and the riparian corridors adjacent to them as open space corridors for the visual amenity, drainage, fisheries, wildlife habitats, flood control, and water quality value.

Where feasible, integrate creek-side greenways with the City's open space system and encourage public access to creek corridors.

Protect aquifer recharge areas

needed to maintain adequate groundwater supplies.

Maintain oak woodlands and habitat for sensitive biological resources as open space for resource conservation/resource management.

Minimize conflicts between urban and agricultural uses by requiring buffers and greenbelts.

### Agriculture

Promote continued agricultural use of important farmland outside the urban area.

Continue to work with Butte County to maintain the Greenline.

Minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban uses by requiring buffers or use restrictions or using roads or creeks to separate uses.

### Mineral Resources

Work with the State and Butte County to identify and protect significant mineral resources in the Planning Area.

Coordinate mineral resource extraction with other land uses.

### Archaeological, Historic, and Paleontological Resources

Protect archaeological, historic, and paleontological resources for their aesthetic, scientific, educational, and cultural values.

### Energy Resources

Conserve scarce or nonrenewable energy resources.

Promote energy efficiency in new subdivisions and in building design.

### Waste Management and Recycling

Reduce the generation of solid waste, including hazardous waste, and recycle those materials that are used, to slow the filling of local and regional landfills.

## Safety and Safety Services

### Flooding and Dam Inundation

Minimize threat to life and property from flooding and dam inundation.

### Seismic and Geologic Hazards

Protect lives and property from seismic and geologic hazards.

### Fire Services

Continue to provide high-quality, effective, and efficient fire protection services for Chico area residents.

Minimize the loss of life and property resulting from the hazards of fire, medical and rescue emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and disaster response and recovery.

### Law Enforcement

Continue to provide community-oriented policing services that are responsive to citizens' needs.

Increase and maintain public confidence in the ability of the Police Department to provide quality police services.

### Emergency Management

Use the City's Emergency Plan as the guide for emergency management.

### Miscellaneous Hazards

Protect residents from the potential health dangers of electric and magnetic fields generated by power transmission lines and other sources, and hazards associated with agricultural spraying and wind-shear.

### Noise

Protect public health and welfare by eliminating existing noise problems where feasible, by establishing standards for acceptable indoor and outdoor noise, and by preventing significant increases in noise levels.

Incorporate noise considerations into land use planning decisions, and guide the location and design of transportation facilities to minimize the effects of noise on adjacent land uses.

### Housing

Provide equal opportunity and access for Chico citizens regardless of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital/family status or handicap. Protected classes as defined by law shall be covered by this provision.

Provide housing affordable to all economic segments of the community.

Ensure a balanced rate of growth between housing production, employment and provision of services.

Encourage a diversity of housing opportunities that satisfy the physical, social and economic needs of all Chico residents.

Conserve and upgrade the existing housing stock.

Promote home ownership for all economic sectors of the population.

Encourage the conservation of energy in all residential development.

Ensure the highest possible quality of life for every resident through balancing and blending the need for shelter with sensitivity and respect for Chico's unique natural setting.





General Plan Diagram

NOTES:

1. Locations of future parks and school sites are general; alternate locations in the same vicinity may be approved without amending the General Plan.
2. The Butte County Airport Land Use Commission's Keopone Area includes land within two miles of the Chico Municipal Airport boundary.
3. Alternating bands of different uses indicate that the designated mix of uses is permitted.
4. Land within the Urban Development Area boundary designated for development and marked with the Open Space for Environmental Conservation/Safety designation will be subject to resource management overlay zoning district regulations.
5. The General Plan Diagram is a diagrammatic representation of policies contained in the General Plan. It is to be used and interpreted in conjunction with the text and other figures contained in the General Plan. Uses on sites less than two acres are generally not depicted on the Diagram. (see also section 2.1 in the General Plan)
6. This General Plan Diagram incorporates all amendments through July 1, 1996.

